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Review of *Middle Eastern Television Drama. Politics, Aesthetics, Practices*, Edited by Christa Salamandra and Nour Halabi, ISBN: 9781032027814, Routledge. 2023.

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Since the early 2000s Netflix has been destabilizing the dominance of English-language television drama by offering a platform for the global distribution of drama serials from all over the world. The catalogues of the streaming service nowadays include drama serials not only from the established television nations but also from countries such as South Korea, Denmark and Lebanon. Recently, the global television industry has seen an upsurge in Middle Eastern television drama. However, the growing popularity of series originating in Egypt and Turkey, among others, has not yet turned into vast scholarly interest. Salamandra and Halabi's (2023) *Middle Eastern Television Drama. Politics, Aesthetics, Practices* sets out to fill in this gap by offering nine articles with a broad range of topics, approaches and series.

In addition to the expanding circulation of Middle Eastern television drama, there is another reason why television scholars should turn their focus to the Middle East. As Nour Halabi and Christa Salamandra state in their introductory chapter, "fictional television drama serves as a key site of sociopolitical commentary in Middle East" (p. 1). The articles included in the book highlight the various ways in which politics is closely intertwined both with the production and the reception of television drama. To understand the ways in which television drama interrelates with its sociopolitical context, one must understand the prevailing media landscape as well as the cultural and political history of the Middle East.

In a number of Middle Eastern countries, media is heavily regulated by the state. Gianluca P. Parolin's article provides an example from Egypt, where the Drama Commission of the Supreme Council is overseeing "the encoding of the new hegemonic vision" in television drama (p. 82). Parolin as well as Walter Armbrust both present in their articles that Egyptian television drama aims at modifying public opinion—either before or after major societal changes. Armbrust analyses a drama titled *al-Gam'a* (2010) which anticipated the discourse used for excommunicating Muslim Brotherhood during the 2011 revolution. Parolin investigates *Kalabsh* (2017) as a counterrevolutionary serial drama, which aimed at modifying public beliefs on social media activism after the revolution.

Unlike in Western television fiction, historical events are often used in Middle Eastern television drama to comment on the prevailing sociopolitical context. Josh Carney's article on the Turkish *Resurrection* suggests, that period drama may not only be created to attract viewers but also to represent the conservative values of the ruling party (p. 6). Located in the Ottoman empire, *Resurrection* supports the current regime by promoting strong and authoritarian leadership (p. 20). Esha Momeni writes on a TV docudrama series that served as state propaganda by generating new understandings of martyrdom in Iran. The docudrama also exemplifies how historical events and central religious figures were used in a television series to legitimate the war between Iran and Iraq. Martyrdom was essential in the formation of Iran's identity after 1980 and is still useful to the Islamic Republic (p. 30). Christa Salamandra explores Syrian drama from two temporal directions: first, historical drama as a sociopolitical critique and second, dramatic representations of contemporary society as being always about the past (p. 103). Salamandra states that serials set in the early days of Arab conquest idealize historic figures (p. 106).

In the Western countries the question of historicity or historical accuracy is often raised in discussions concerning period dramas such as *The Crown*. However, whether a serial succeeds in presenting historical facts does not usually have far-reaching societal consequences. In the Middle East history,

religion and politics are inseparably intertwined which places a different emphasis also on the relationship between fact and fiction. The past is seen as a depository of examples and lessons which can be exploited for different purposes. Historical figures may be seen as sacred and therefore, when depicting the past one must balance between historical facts and myths in a way that differs from that of period drama productions in the Western countries (see p. 14-15).

The political situation may not only impact the meaning-making process but also the production and distribution of television series. Producing a television drama serial is never an easy task but producing a television drama serial in a politically unstable situation is even more challenging. In Afghanistan, many media professionals were killed or fled to other countries as refugees, as Wazmah Osman remarks (p. 144). The difficulty of finding female actors in a highly religious society may complicate the production of drama serials (p. 147). The distribution of television series may be affected by the sociopolitical context as well. As Arzu Öztürkmen states, the trade of Turkish drama series has become a huge business (p. 164). However, Turkey's changing political stance toward some Arab countries led to a ban of Turkish series on MBC, the main media conglomerate in the Middle East (p. 165). Despite the state having a strong hold over media in many countries, some drama series manage to evade the regulations. Mehdi Semati and Nima Behroozi present *Gando*, the Iranian serialized spy drama as an example. *Gando* violates the IRIB's 'aesthetics of modesty' by showing consumption of alcohol outside Iran (p. 130). More importantly, the series taps into current political anxieties and discourses, such as concerns over national security and Western sanctions (p. 125).

In addition to providing a range of analyses on television series, *Middle Eastern Television Drama* gives an excellent overview of the broadcasting systems and television industries in the Middle East. The authors give interesting insights on media in Turkey, Iran, and Egypt as well as on the history of these countries. These contextualizations are essential to understanding the role that the series under study play. Semati and Behroozi's article, for example, presents an overview of the Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting and the Iranian broadcasting landscape in general. The main Iranian broadcast houses multiple operations including terrestrial and satellite channels, streaming capabilities and an affiliated university (p. 129). Esha Momeni dwells deeper in the history of Iran by analyzing the use of war propaganda back when the country had only two television channels (p. 27-28). Together these articles build a solid base for understanding Iranian serial drama.

Parolin's article on social media activism in Egyptian television drama presents a new approach to the 2011 revolution and the following counterrevolution. Halabi's text on fictional television in Syria does not only analyse drama serials but also discusses the geography of inequality by shedding light on the informal settlements that grew to house rural migrants and became a housing solution for half of the population (p. 89). The sociopolitical role of drama series in Syria is indicated by the fact that informal settlement drama has become a distinct genre in Syrian television (p. 94).

The Middle East is often seen as a geopolitical entity mostly defined by religion, but the region includes a broad range of histories, cultures, languages and regimes. As the articles indicate, there is also great variation in terms of media system. Therefore, a critical discussion of the strengths and weaknesses of using the Middle East as a defining concept for a book on television drama would have enriched the Introduction. Diverse cultural and political climates in these countries provide diverse challenges for both television production and related research. Emphasizing the differences between the countries

involved would have contributed to the research on Middle Eastern media by stressing that there is no such thing as ‘Middle Eastern television drama’. Instead, there are countless number of series, genres, productions, practices, etc. The editors suggest that scholars should understand Middle Eastern drama series as ‘expressions of regional concern’. But to truly enhance the understanding of non-Western television they should acknowledge the diversity of Middle Eastern drama series and study them as expressions of national and local concerns.

Diversity is, however, present in the methods employed in the articles. Analyzing Middle Eastern television drama calls not only for understanding the sociopolitical context of production and reception, but it also craves for somewhat different approaches than those mostly used in studying US or European drama series. The authors of the book represent various academic disciplines, such as anthropology, communication, folklore, and law (p. 2). Although many of the articles focus on textual analysis, various backgrounds of the authors give each text a completely different flavor. Short discussions on the challenges that the authors may have encountered while studying Middle Eastern television drama would have highlighted the different realities in which media scholars work. Television producers, directors and script writers are not easy to reach for research interviews in the Western countries, and in regions like the Middle East it is probably even harder.

One of the most interesting articles in terms of method is Arzu Öztürkmen’s study on the distribution of the Turkish *dizi* genre. Turkish drama series have in recent years attracted attention well beyond the Middle East. Öztürkmen began by doing interviews, moved on to ethnography and became a “circumstantial activist” (p. 157). Her hands-on approach to the topic paints a vivid picture on how television drama from a particular linguistic and geopolitical region can break through to the global market. The international success of *dizi* genre not only transformed the role of Turkey in the global television business but also destabilized the Turkish television industry by creating new dynamics between distributors and producers (p. 155).

While some of the articles would have benefited from a more precise description of the method and data, their arguments provide a valuable contribution to the research of contemporary television. Thus, they pave the way for future studies on Middle Eastern television drama. The global television industry already has their eyes on the Middle East and audiences around the globe are increasingly consuming television fiction from outside the Anglo-American cultural sphere. Now it is time for television studies to show interest in content that is consumed by millions of people and, as the articles indicate, has a remarkable influence on their lives.

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Review of *Translation Tools and Technologies*, by Andrew Rothwell, Joss Moorkens, María Fernández-Parra, Joanna Drugan, Frank Austermuehl, ISBN: 9780367750329, Routledge. 2023.

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Translation Tools and Technologies (Routledge, 2023), by Andrew Rothwell, Joss Moorkens, María Fernández-Parra, Joanna Drugan, and Frank Austermuehl, aims to provide translators with guidance to the digital tools and technologies that increasingly mediate every aspect of their professional activity. The wide range of topics covered in the book, including the depth of details covered in the discussion, makes this clear implicitly. Thematically, the content is divided into two broad subjects: chapters 1 to 7 explore technologies relating to the actual translation of language, while chapters 8 to 12 focus on the technologies in which such translation occurs with particular emphasis on contexts, platforms, and processes. Following the explicit practical purposes of the work, topics are discussed in an approachable, highly structured way, using many illustrations to clarify details of the tools and technologies the book considers. The wide spectrum of topics covered in this book can be highly beneficial for a wide range of audiences, including but not limited to novice translators who are new to the profession, experienced translators adapting to novel technological requirements in their work, and translators moving into managerial positions. As the authors note (p. 2), the increasing rapidity of developments in the requirements associated with these technologies makes this guidebook an essential and valuable resource.

The speed of these developments is especially notable in the first of the two broad subjects identified above (chapters 1 to 7), about technologies pertaining directly to the translation process. Machine translation (MT) and computer-assisted translation (CAT) are the areas in which the broad effort to replicate intelligent human activity with computerized processes has shown some of the most striking results since the early to mid-twentieth century (Aguilar, 2023). MT and CAT have made significant progress, and now, much of the work that human translators need to do is pre- and post-editing and proofreading the translations generated by such technologies (Rothwell et al., 2023). A detailed understanding of how various approaches to MT and CAT work is, therefore, beneficial for translators engaged in such work, as it enables them to predict likely challenges, understand problems that do arise, and apply efficient, reliable remedies (Rothwell et al., 2023). The book's approach, in this respect, is informed by the intended audience, framing the discussion in terms that are likely to maximize the benefits for professional translators.

Chapter 1, “Introducing Translation Tools and Technologies,” discusses the impact of Tan and Nagao’s (1995) innovation of the combination of statistical and lexical approaches to the use of parallel corpora in CAT on the rule-based machine translation (RBMT) approach that was prevalent before this. As this chapter showcases, the use of this approach with parallel corpora and translation memory (TM) had a massive impact on the accuracy, fluency, and naturalness of MT. The perpetual salience of this approach makes familiarity with it invaluable for the contemporary translator.

Chapter 2, “Principles of Computer-Assisted Translation,” explores the common CAT tools for translation tasks, provides guidance to their use, and evaluates the strengths and weaknesses of the various offerings. This chapter will be valuable for translators seeking to determine which applications are appropriate for which types of tasks and how to make such evaluations. The main strengths of CAT are productivity, consistency, and efficiency, such as allowing multiple translators to contribute to a single translation at the same time. The main weaknesses relate to creative and idiomatic uses of language and the time they often require learning to use. Given these weaknesses, Rothwell et al. (2023) propose that the use of CAT for projects be determined by considering the risks of incorrect

translation. For example, for texts where mistranslation can be very costly, CAT should only be used early in the process and only with supervision by human translators.

Chapter 3, “Translation Memory, Matching, Alignment, and Data Exchange,” makes reference to the topics introduced in Chapter 1 and explores them in more detail. The primary focus is the impact of Gale and Church’s (1994) “statistical alignment” approach to building parallel corpora in natural language processing. The chapter illustrates how statistical alignment achieves consistency across numerous languages through the advanced algorithms to search and excerpt legacy translations from corpora. The detailed discussion of the practical implementation of such approaches in contemporary technologies will give translators a deeper appreciation for the computational logic on which these algorithms are based, thereby enhancing the value translators can get out of them.

Chapter 4, “Managing Terminology in CAT Tools,” develops this line of inquiry by considering the use of termbases for the management of terminological consistency in CAT tools. The chapter explores the practical specifics of term extraction, the importing and exporting of termbase data, and associated technical challenges translators are likely to encounter. As the discussion demonstrates, these resources are of great value in multi-translator contexts, enabling overseers of projects to ensure lexical coherence across the entire translation and avoiding the risks associated with divergences.

Chapter 5 explores electronic corpora and concordance tools in further detail. Concordance tools allow translators to search the translation memory (TM) to see how specific terms or phrases have been translated before. This helps promote consistency and makes the translation process more efficient. A specific area of focus is placed on the use of these technologies for the purposes of alignment with the target audiences’ cultural values and idiomatic expectations. The authors discuss the various approaches to the generation of relevant databases, with a focus on the benefits of online affordances such as websites dedicated to this purpose or bespoke internet searches, as well as tools such as AntConc or Sketch Engine, a corpus-study tool, that adopt a strategy more closely in alignment with the traditional approach.

Chapter 6 turns its attention to current machine translation technologies, tracing their development out of earlier iterations. This focus on the processes whereby the technologies have developed is of value to a clear explication of the computational rationales on which the contemporary state-of-the-art technology is based. The theoretical discussion focuses on the impact of neural-network-based approaches on MT, and the current challenges that still require solutions. The more practical considerations of the chapter are given to the role of translators in the pre- and post-editing with MT technologies, using the foregoing theoretical grounding as a way to clarify areas of focus and concern in various scenarios. This chapter provides perhaps the best example of one of the book’s most notable strengths: the depth of its engagement with the precursors to contemporary tools and technologies. The insights afforded by such material illuminate the trajectory of the developments out of which the contemporary tools and technologies have emerged, and the rationales underpinning them, as well as the ways in which they are currently adopted. The insights these discussions offer to translators who will need to work with such technologies are of great value to an in-depth understanding of the principles on which they are based and how they do what they do. They will equip professional translators with the skills to evaluate the comparative strengths and drawbacks of various systems, and to judge their appropriateness for specific contexts.

Chapter 7, “Advanced Leveraging in CAT Tools,” explores recent developments intended to address the two primary drawbacks of CAT: the waste of valuable translation information, and its relative helplessness when TMs or termbases can provide no suitable input. The chapter discusses how contemporary approaches overcome these challenges through approaches such as predictive typing, fuzzy match repair, and automatic tag placement. While many of these technologies are protected by commercial confidentiality, the authors speculate on the role of machine learning in their function, and on likely directions of development in the future.

Chapter 8 provides guidance to the translation project management tools that translators are likely to need to get to grips with the performance of their professional duties. The authors focus mainly on Wordfast Anywhere (WFA) and Phrase. However, the discussion shows the general functional principles of such technologies to help translators when they need to use them in workflow platforms. As with all the chapters in the volume, the more abstract discussion (in this case, of the protocols for the management of translation projects) provides a valuable addition to the practical question of how translators can make the most of the tools.

Chapter 9 explores the translation of subtitles and the editing of CA-translation of subtitles. As in Chapter 8, the discussion focuses on specific actual examples of interfaces for the performance of this kind of work. In addition, there is also consideration of broader contextual developments having a bearing on the work and its requirements, primarily that of a push toward accessibility on the part of large media providers such as the BBC. The chapter demonstrates the opportunities the situation presents, as well as the risks to translators. With the emergence of digital media and platforms for the dissemination of such content as YouTube and Netflix – and the near-global reach of the communications infrastructures required to access them – the demand for such subtitling and the translation associated with it has increased significantly. This has been accompanied by increasing emphasis on accessibility to such media for the hearing impaired. For example, Rothwell et al. (2023) cite the example of the BBC requiring that all content available on its platforms be accessible in this way. This has generated both opportunities for CAT and MT, as well as novel challenges that are likely to shape the ways it develops in the future.

Chapter 10 turns to a closely related set of considerations by considering software, web, and game localization. As with subtitling, contextual, and technological developments of recent decades have contributed to a surge in the demand for this type of input from translators, usually in conjunction with CAT. The chapter provides an overview of the relevant considerations for the localization of websites, digital games, and software, informed by authoritative research on the topic (Singh & Pereira, 2005), and the ways in which translators can expect to be involved in the process. With the increasing globalization of markets and audiences for audio-visual products such as TV series, movies, and digital games, the economic and cultural ramifications of catering to such diverse segments have become increasingly complex. In this respect, again, the opportunities such developments present for CAT and MT are matched by equivalent challenges. Such localization has long been identified as one of the salient challenges to any MT or CAT approach, given the deeply idiomatic nature of the forms of expression required to achieve it successfully (Avramidis, 2019). It also requires an executive determination of how the trade-offs between fidelity to the original context and accommodation to the context of the audience in question are to be managed. For example, in some cases, the cultural

strangeness of the product is likely to be valuable (such as the TV show *Squid Game*), whereas in other cases, varying degrees of accommodation to the idiolect and idioculture of the presumed consumer will be necessary for the product to be intelligible, enjoyable, and commercially viable (Pyae, 2018). Rothwell et al. (2023) do not engage with such questions in any great depth, but their awareness of their implications for the primary topic of translation tools and technologies gives the book a robust engagement with contemporary developments that is a valuable addition.

Chapter 11 focuses on translation quality assurance. While the tools discussed earlier in the book (TM, termbases, etc.) have promoted quality in some respects, they have also created new challenges in this regard. This has given rise to the use of dedicated quality assurance technologies such as QA Distiller and ApSIC Xbench. A significant consequence of this development is that quality assurance now frequently occurs primarily at the project management level rather than among translators themselves. This change can require adaptation from translators, and the chapter provides insights into how this can be managed smoothly.

The final chapter of the volume, Chapter 12, considers human factors connected to translation tools and technologies, including aspects such as translators' working conditions, their workspaces, the accessibility of the tools and technologies they are required to utilize, and related topics. The authors touch on the phenomenon of 'flow', and workspace platforms designed to enhance it. The prime objective of this chapter is to assist translators in structuring their work environment in such a way that they can reach the highest possible levels of productivity and job satisfaction. This final chapter also provides the clearest example of the most significant omissions caused by the authors' approach to the material. The extensive casualization and precarity of translators' employment conditions is mentioned as something of an aside, with Rothwell et al. (2023) primarily concerned about the challenges this poses to researchers seeking reliable data on translation tools and technologies. The lack of discussion of the ways this casualization and employment precarity has largely matched the emergence and spread of technologies is striking, given the topic of the book. The technologies discussed in this chapter are also considered without much critical reflection on the broader socio-political context in which they function. The authors appear to take the explanation provided for the purpose of these technologies entirely at face value: that they are intended to assist translators to work more efficiently and effectively, and that, in this sense, they are of benefit to translators. There is no discussion of the ways in which such technologies serve a disciplinary function, enabling employers to exercise continuous and detailed oversight over the translators' work in ways that could very easily be used for punitive purposes (Coates, 2002).

This dimension of these technologies engenders a marked asymmetry in the relationship between the freelance translator and their employer. The translator's work is systematically casualized, often paid on a piece rate system such as the one advocated by the principles of scientific management and structured in such a way as to limit the employer's liabilities to the translator to the greatest extent possible (insurance, health care, holiday pay, etc.) (Courtney & Phelan, 2019). Despite such an arm's length approach, dedicated platforms for the control of workflows enable the employer to exercise very close scrutiny of and control over the translator's work. While the translator has no control, the employer has complete control. In this regard, these tools are already being used for purposes of surveillance and discipline in the field of translation (Coates, 2002) in ways that appear likely to have

a significant impact on translators' employment security and job satisfaction (Martin et al., 2022; Ravid et al., 2020). Rothwell et al.'s (2023) very limited consideration of the ways in which these technologies are likely to impact the actual employment conditions of translators, thus seems a notable omission.

However, this limitation is more than outweighed by the general strengths of the book. Some strengths of specific chapters are discussed above, with reference to the chapter in question. One more general strength of the work is its rich awareness of and reference to the wider social context in which such tools and technologies are applied. Research on CAT is liable to a lack of consideration of the social and cultural context and an exclusive focus on factors such as language, computing logic, and similar abstract questions. This is perhaps unsurprising, given that such questions, in many respects, represent the conceptual and substantive core of the challenges CAT researchers confront. Technological developments facilitating CAT (the 'upstream' context) receive extensive attention, as do social, political, and cultural contexts having a bearing on the reception of the language itself. As Rothwell et al.'s (2023) consideration shows, however, there are significant downstream contextual factors, unrelated to specifically linguistic matters, that have an impact on the design and application of CAT.

Translation Tools and Technologies is likely to prove to be an invaluable addition to any professional translator's shelf. As the authors note, the pace of technological development in the field means that almost anyone stands to benefit from this kind of resource. The importance of the topic is matched by the authors' expertise, the clarity of the exposition, and the exhaustiveness with which the topics have been covered. The book achieves its own aims admirably, and the authors are to be commended for the work.

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Taming the Beast: Bullying and Censorship in Interlingual Subtitling

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Abstract

This research scrutinizes the representation and impact of verbal bullying in audiovisual (AV) content, focusing specifically on the Jordanian Netflix show *AlRawabi School for Girls*. Differences in British and American English interlingual subtitling are examined as tools for regulating subtitled content for adolescents. Employing a qualitative research approach, the study uses a parallel corpus of source (Jordanian Arabic) and target texts (British and American English) to explore patterns, bullying language themes, and subtitling practices' role. Five principal categories of verbal bullying are identified: threats, insults, taunts, rumors, and deflection through humor. Subtitlers mitigate these themes using adaptive strategies such as neutralization, substitution, and stylistic amplification. The research reveals that British English undergoes greater censorship than American English due to differing cultural sensitivities and stricter UK regulations. These findings stress the importance of censoring verbal bullying in adolescent-targeted AV materials and highlight the pivotal role of subtitling practices and effective regulatory measures. The study suggests a need for a uniform, global approach to managing harmful subtitle language to protect young viewers.

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1. Introduction

The psychology and sociology fields have extensively investigated the weaponization of language within the milieu of adolescent bullying and maltreatment (Juvonen & Graham, 2014; Smith & Brain, 2000; Sutton & Smith, 1999; Vaillancourt et al., 2008). Nevertheless, an extensive gap persists in research that scrutinizes the influence of bullying language within audio-visual (AV) materials, with specific emphasis on the implementation of subtitling as a mechanism of censorship. Therefore, the present study endeavors to remedy this deficiency by scrutinizing aspects or patterns of bullying language in the Jordanian Netflix show, *AlRawabi School for Girls*, directed by Shomali (2021) and contrasting the nuances between British and American English interlingual subtitling as tools for regulating AV-subtitled content that targets adolescent viewers.

AlRawabi School for Girls is a groundbreaking show series representing a milestone for Netflix as it represents the platform's first Jordanian scripted drama and its second original Arabic-language production. Choosing the show as a case study is noteworthy due to its emphasis on adolescent girls and its willingness to address subjects frequently deemed taboo in Middle Eastern societies. It offers a modern description of Generation Z teenagers, highlighting the brutal and controversial reality of gendered violence, honor killings, and bullying in Jordanian society. It explores the dynamics of bullying, including how power imbalances, social hierarchies, and societal pressures contribute to it. Moreover, the show reveals the devastating impact of bullying on both the victim and the bully, highlighting its long-lasting effects on mental health and self-esteem. Therefore, the show serves as a rich repository for the current study since it comprehensively explores the complex and interconnected issues facing modern-day teenagers in the Middle East.

When examining the limitations of subtitling, the usual constraints that come to mind are text compression and mode alteration (Scandura, 2004). However, one seldom associates censorship as a restriction imposed on subtitling. Cox (1979, p. 313) suggests that censorship is "the intentional act of preventing someone from accessing certain verbal, graphic, dramatic, or sonic material with the intention of safeguarding a preferred belief or attitude". In the realm of audio-visual translation (AVT), Scandura (2004) contends that censorship is often veiled through dubbing and subtitling, which effectively mask the omission or replacement of overt, raw, or problematic phrases, implications, or mentions. Although censorship is most commonly associated with external entities such as governments, distribution companies, or networks requiring modifications to AV materials, subtitlers' self-censorship is another equally compelling aspect. Self-censorship occurs when the subtitlers consciously modify or tone down the sexual innuendos, wordplay, or taboo elements in the original material to safeguard their audience. The spectrum of censoring activities is vast and encompasses many actions, including removing scenes, altering vulgar language, deleting references, or changing the plot (Gambier, 2018).

Bullying is a decisive social issue, especially among teenagers. Verbal bullying means using aggressive, intimidating, or demeaning words or expressions intended to belittle, humiliate, or dominate another person, contributing to a hostile environment (Gredler, 2003b). This form of verbal aggression is a key component of bullying behavior, which typically involves a power imbalance and repeated behavior over time. In light of this, the present study utilizes an aligned parallel corpus of the

source text (i.e., Jordanian Arabic) and the target text (i.e., British and American English) to investigate the patterns and themes of verbal bullying, as well as examining how interlingual subtitling practices can be used as tools for censorship. Furthermore, this study provides valuable insights into the role of subtitling practices in controlling media content, with potential implications for media censorship policies and practices. Ultimately, this study contributes to the ongoing discourse on the description of bullying language in media and the need for effective regulations to minimize its negative impact on adolescent viewers. In line with the above, this research attempts to address the following research questions:

1. What are the patterns and themes of bullying language in Netflix's *AlRawabi School for Girls*?
2. How do British and American English interlingual subtitling differ in their use as a tool for censorship?
3. How do subtitling practices influence the portrayal of bullying language?
4. What implications do these practices have for regulating AV content targeted at adolescent viewers?

2. Literature review

2.1. Audio-visual Translation (AVT)

In the contemporary media landscape, which is rife with AV materials that can be accessed through various platforms and media, the significance of AVT in our daily lives has become increasingly apparent. Consequently, scholars' interest has been fueled in exploring how AV products' linguistic and non-linguistic elements are conveyed to audiences through AVT. As Fong and Au (2009) put it, AVT is a complex discipline that involves transferring verbal and non-verbal aspects of AV materials. As such, it is a multi-semiotic translation that encompasses a wide range of linguistic and visual cues. Among the various modes of AVT, subtitling is the most researched in translation studies. Karamitroglou (2022, p. 5) defines subtitling as "the translation of the spoken (or written) source text of an audio-visual product into a written target text which is added onto the images of the original product, usually at the bottom of the screen." Subtitling is traditionally classified based on linguistic and technical parameters, with the linguistic parameter being the most distinctive feature (Liu, 2014). Orero (2004, p. 57) states that the linguistic parameter signifies "the relationship that is established between source and target languages, whether this is the same or not." Different types of subtitling can be classified based on factors such as language combination, purpose, presentation, and timing. However, for the purpose of this study, the two primary categories of subtitling, grounded in the linguistic parameter, are interlingual and intralingual (Gottlieb, 1997; Orero, 2004).

2.2. Interlingual subtitling

The surge in global consumption of audio-visual content, especially on streaming platforms like Netflix, has escalated the demand for interlingual subtitling. Interlingual subtitling, which involves the

translation of subtitles from a source language to a target language (Díaz-Cintas, 2003), operates across two linguistic dimensions, spanning both spoken and written modalities. It has also been described as diagonal or oblique subtitling (Gottlieb, 1997). The central aim of interlingual subtitling is to deliver an accurate and faithful representation of the original message to the target audience (Díaz-Cintas & Remael, 2014). The task necessitates language proficiency and an understanding of relevant cultural nuances to ensure contextually appropriate translation (Chaume, 2013). Owing to space and time limitations in subtitling, adaptations are often required instead of literal translations (Georgakopoulou, 2009).

Interlingual subtitling is available in various forms, including traditional subtitling, closed captioning, and SDH (Subtitles for the Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing). Traditional interlingual subtitling entails translating audio content from one language to another using written text. In contrast, closed captioning involves transcribing audio content into written text at the bottom of the screen. SDH, conversely, comprises translating audio content into written text while incorporating additional information regarding sounds and other audio elements pertinent to the plot (Gambier, 2001).

Netflix, an American streaming platform with diverse audio-visual content from countries worldwide, necessitates interlingual subtitling. Accordingly, the platform offers interlingual subtitles in various languages, including American and British English. Nevertheless, the two types of English interlingual subtitling differ in their methodology, with American interlingual subtitling characterized by a more literal translation of the audio content and British interlingual subtitling adopting a more nuanced translation to capture the cultural context of the audio content.

Censorship often plays a role in interlingual subtitling, particularly when handling dialects. Dialects, or regional language variations, may include words and expressions deemed offensive or inappropriate in other regions (Roca, 2000). As a result, interlingual subtitling frequently employs euphemisms and censorship to avoid offending the target audience (Chiaro, 2009). Both American and British interlingual subtitling practices commonly utilize censorship (Díaz-Cintas, 2012; Pedersen, 2011).

2.3. Weaponizing language

While there is considerable research on language use in entertainment media (Anderson et al., 2010; Billings et al., 2015; Van Dijk, 2001), specific studies exploring the concept of language “weaponization”—the use of language as a tool for harm or manipulation—in movies and television shows appear to be limited in current academic discourse. Much of the existing research has centered around the utilization of language in comparative translational studies (Baker, 2018), nonviolent communication (Rosenberg & Chopra, 2015), and the framing of conflict (Entman, 2007). These studies broadly discuss the militarization of language, focusing on its role in justifying or condemning warfare rather than its weaponization in terms of verbal abuse or derogatory speech, leaving a gap in understanding the potentially harmful effects of language within entertainment media.

The term “weaponized language” has been used in popular media to describe various scenarios, including ancient pre-battlefield incantations and schoolyard bullying (Strawhand, 2012). However, there is a need for a narrower definition that considers other interpretations. This clarification should be regarded both by the media and those engaging with the concept. Borowski (2019) proposed that

for language to be considered weaponized, it must meet four specific criteria: the presence of an elite group that develops a narrative, the bombardment of slogans, a charismatic figurehead for the movement, and a closed-off attitude toward international interactions. This understanding of weaponizing language highlights the broader impact it can have on the behaviors of individuals and societies beyond just insults fueled by language.

Pascale (2019) claims that the current weaponization of language is based on four tactics: censorship, propaganda, disinformation, and mundane discourse. Censorship limits the expression of ideas that challenge the dominant power structure. On the other hand, propaganda involves the deliberate manipulation of facts and fabrication to promote a specific viewpoint. Disinformation tactics are designed to maintain power by inciting reactive responses that perpetuate civil instability, while mundane discourse involves mobilizing media and the public to spread disinformation, even when it involves repeating absurd claims and conspiracy theories (Pascale, 2019). Therefore, this study aims to shed light on the phenomenon of bullying language in subtitled show series in entertainment media.

2.4. Bullying language

Bullying is a widespread social phenomenon characterized by exerting power and control over others through aggressive behavior. The power imbalance between the bully and the victim is a defining feature of bullying. It can result in significant harm to the victim, including physical, verbal, and mental harm (Gladden et al., 2014). Verbal bullying involves using hostile language to isolate the victim from their peers, while physical bullying involves using force (Raskauskas & Modell, 2011).

The relationship between threats, insults, taunts, rumors, and deflecting with humor expressions and yelling, put-downs, name-calling, and belittling behaviors lies in the fact that they can all be classified as forms of verbal abuse. Verbal abuse is characterized by using negative language, tone, and behaviors to demean, belittle, or control another person (Evans, 1996)—each category shares commonalities with the broader concept of verbal abuse. Threats involve using language to intimidate or manipulate a person by instilling fear of potential harm (Vissing et al., 1991). In comparison, insults are derogatory remarks to undermine a person's dignity or self-esteem. Taunting is often a mocking or ironic remark to ridicule someone indirectly (Gibbs Jr., 2000), while rumors include spreading false or damaging information about someone with the intent of harming their reputation (DiFonzo & Bordia, 2007).

Furthermore, deflecting with humor means using humor to belittle or dismiss someone's concerns or feelings (Martin, 2007). Each category aligns with the broader concept of verbal abuse as they involve using language and communication to harm, demean, or control another person. Therefore, they can all be considered forms of verbal bullying.

Bullying can take on several forms, including direct and indirect bullying. Direct bullying encompasses physical acts of aggression, such as striking or threatening, while indirect bullying can include exclusion or spreading rumors (Salleh & Zainal, 2014). In addition, the humanistic theory emphasizes the impact of bullying on an individual's emotional and social development (Woolfolk & Margetts, 2012). Bullying has also been defined as peer harassment or victimization in social settings by Hoover et al. (1992), highlighting the dynamic nature of the roles that individuals may play in bullying dynamics.

Bullying language is a significant issue affecting individuals and society. The harmful effects of bullying are not limited to childhood and adolescence but can extend into adulthood. Studies have shown that victims of bullying may experience long-term consequences, such as low self-esteem, depression, and anxiety (Nansel et al., 2001). Furthermore, bullying can decrease academic performance and cause school absenteeism or even dropout (Dake et al., 2003; Juvonen et al., 2003; Muscari, 2002; Nansel et al., 2001). The severity of bullying language and its consequences highlight the importance of addressing this issue and developing effective strategies to prevent bullying.

2.5. Manifestations of verbal bullying

Verbal bullying encompasses a vast array of behaviors directed at causing harm to another individual. These behaviors include physical, verbal, psychological, and cyberbullying and contain many actions such as insults, name-calling, teasing, sexual touching, exposure of private body parts, controlling behavior, and spreading rumors or images (Nansel et al., 2001). Furthermore, this behavior extends beyond the traditional definition of bullying and encompasses sexual harassment and relationship violence, among others.

According to Forsberg (2019), young people are more likely to perceive their interactions as bullying if they occur with an opponent rather than a friend. This is due to the assumption of mutual consent between friends without a refusal. The target's reaction, whether emotional harm was expressed or not, was also examined by participants when deciding if the interaction constituted bullying. The concept of consent plays a crucial role in understanding bullying language among young people. Forsberg (2019) argues that consent is central to young people's comprehension, implying that mutual consent is assumed for name-calling, teasing, and sexual or intimate touching within the context of friendships. This aligns with the sexual consent literature, which suggests that consent is assumed without a refusal within dating and established relationships (Milnes et al., 2022).

Bullying is a multi-faceted issue that can take various forms, including overt, physical or verbal, and indirect or relational (Smith et al., 1999). Physical bullying is the most noticeable form and receives the most attention, particularly in light of growing concerns about violence (Gredler, 2003a). Verbal bullying, on the other hand, involves name-calling, teasing, and verbal threats (Crick & Grotpeter, 1996). Relational bullying has received less attention, which may be due to a misunderstanding that it is less harmful or because it may be perceived as typical female behavior (Smith et al., 1999). Relational bullying involves harm to the victim through manipulating or destroying their social relationships, such as social exclusion, spreading rumors, or withholding friendship (Bauman & Del Rio, 2006). Consequently, given its relevance to AV-subtitled materials, this study will concentrate exclusively on verbal bullying.

2.6. Censorship

Popular media platforms, including Netflix, wield substantial influence over the convictions and conduct of modern-day adolescents. Wan & Gut (2008) indicate that adolescents dedicate considerable time to media consumption. Accordingly, embedding a mechanism of media bullying-language delivery within the textual content of audio-visual materials rife with various weaponry is crucial in

mitigating the adverse impact on young adults. Bullying is a recurrent theme in many Netflix originals, necessitating the meticulous inspection of researchers, particularly those in the AVT field.

Censorship has been prevalent throughout human history in various communication formats, including books, newspapers, radio, TV, and cinema. Gambier (1994) highlights the importance of studying what is transformed and why in subtitling. One of the reasons for such transformations is censorship, which can be attributed to several factors, including politics, political correctness, religion, and self-censorship (Scandura, 2004, p. 125).

Self-censorship occurs when the translator modifies certain elements based on their subjective assessment of appropriateness, sometimes intending to “protect” the audience (Scandura, 2004, p.125). In such cases, the translator’s lack of knowledge of idioms or foreign cultures may result in mistranslations or undertranslations, making them self-censors (Lung, 1998). An explicit form of censorship is the omission of references and allusions, which may be acceptable and even the translator’s duty in some instances, whether or not the translators are aware of such censorship (Scandura, 2004). However, failing to eliminate or alter the reference can lead to negative consequences, while in some instances the omission might be a result of the translator’s insufficient understanding, the underestimation of the audience’s capacity, or the translator’s inability to identify the reference in the first place (Scandura, 2004).

In AVT, it is imperative to bear in mind that the consumption of such content serves a twofold purpose: entertainment and cultural education (Scandura, 2004). As such, expunging aspects deemed uncultured, insignificant, or localized may impede the audience’s exposure to authentic representations of different cultures and traditions. A subtitler’s responsibility is to ensure that the audience is not deprived of these learning opportunities due to unnecessary omissions that could hinder their cultural education.

The investigation of verbal bullying and censorship in interlingual subtitling lies in subtitlers’ critical role in content mediation. Dealing with sensitive issues like bullying requires careful handling by the subtitler, potentially involving the application of censorship. Given that bullying is a social issue with significant potential harm, controlling such language in AV content, especially aimed at younger audiences, becomes paramount. Hence, finding an optimal balance between censorship and authentic representation in AVT is crucial to ensuring that the audiences’ learning experiences are not compromised, especially in addressing sensitive subjects such as bullying.

3. Method

This research adopts a qualitative methodology, emphasizing collecting and analyzing non-numerical data, including source dialogue audio and interlingual target subtitles, to understand better the concepts, opinions, and experiences related to verbal bullying and its representation in AV materials. Utilizing this approach, the study endeavors to attain a more nuanced comprehension of bullying language by examining its multiple dimensions and manifestations within the subtitling context. The analysis delves into the complexities of bullying language around lexical choices, tone, and communicative intent. Moreover, the investigation critically examines how these elements are conveyed and the potential modifications or censorship occurring during the subtitling process,

focusing on the distinctions between American and British English and an acknowledgment of their unique cultural contexts. This qualitative data aims to garner profound, meaningful insights into the interlingual subtitling of verbal bullying and its representation.

3.1. Corpus of the study

The corpus of this study is composed of SRT (SubRip subtitle) files that were sourced from the Netflix website. These files have been systematically arranged in a Microsoft Excel file. They are divided into three separate columns: Jordanian Vernacular Arabic (the original language), American English (the first translated language), and British English (the second translated language). The subtitles were meticulously matched up to pinpoint the ones carrying subtle undertones of bullying language. These cases were then categorized based on their corresponding themes for deeper examination and analysis.

3.2. Data analysis

The *AlRawabi School for Girls* show was created in Jordanian Vernacular (JV) and subtitled intralingually and interlingually. Drawing on Ferguson's (1959) influential model of diglossia, which suggests the coexistence of two distinct varieties within a language—the elevated high (H) and vernacular low (L)—this study conducts a comparative analysis using interlingual British and American English subtitles. These subtitles were extracted directly from the Netflix platform for this investigation. First, the show was watched multiple times by the researchers to identify scenes featuring bullying language. This allowed for an English translation of the JV, highlighting differences between the source text (ST) and interlingual subtitling in British and American English. Subsequently, through a comprehensive analysis of the ST script and interlingual subtitling, the subtitles were categorized into five themes by the researchers: threat, insult, taunt, rumors, and deflecting with humor, all about describing bullying language.

The procedures for this study are:

1. Selecting an Arabic series that is subtitled in British and American English.
2. Watching the six miniseries of *AlRawabi School for Girls* show and identifying the scenes containing bullying language.
3. Extracting the ST in JVA and the interlingual subtitles (British and American English) and identifying the bullying language expressions.
4. Classifying the bullying language expressions into different categories based on themes, such as threat, insult, taunt, rumors, and deflecting with humor.
5. Analyzing the identified expressions in JV, British, and American English.

4. Results

In this section, the five categories outlined in the methodology section, namely (1) threat, (2) insult, (3) taunt, (4) rumors, and (5) deflecting with humor expressions are elaborated.

4.1. Threat

Threat can be defined as an intentional statement of hostility against someone in retribution for a wrongdoing or failure to act (Hample, 2005). The frequent recourse to an array of threat expressions, as manifest in a plethora of media texts, is indicative of a discursive pattern of threat that exerts a profound influence on the affective states of the audience, engendering feelings of fear and anxiety that permeate throughout society (Ozyumenko & Larina, 2020). As such, this discursive strategy may be deemed a carefully crafted and calculated tactic for manipulating public opinion. The same discursive tactics may be deployed in entertainment platforms to convey bullying language, thereby exacerbating the deleterious impact of such linguistic maneuvers. Table 1 shows the Jordanian vernacular subtitles that use threat expressions as a theme for delivering bullying language with their interlingual British and American subtitles.

Table 1. The use of threat expressions to denote bullying

No	ST Jordanian Vernacular	TT American Subtitles	TT British Subtitles
1	إذا مرة ثانية بتفكري توقي بوجهي راح أدمرك. حتى لو كان هاد آخر اشي بعمله بحياتي.	If you cross me again, I will destroy you, even if it's the last thing I do!	If you ever try to stand in my way again, there will be blood. And I will destroy you even if it's the last thing I do!
2	أنت لا تشغلي بالك ليان. أنا راح أسود عيشتها.	Don't worry, Layan. I'll show her.	Don't worry, Layan. I'll make her life a living hell.

Table 1 displays the application of threatening expressions to signify bullying. In Example 1, American English adopts direct and explicit language, threatening to “destroy” the targeted individual. Conversely, British English uses a more nuanced approach with carefully selected words and phrases subtly conveying the same threatening intention. This subtlety is often achieved through euphemisms or more delicate vocabulary, which may lessen the perceived severity of the threat. For instance, promising to “destroy” or warning of “blood” can be phrased less aggressively, thus conveying the underlying message with a sense of finesse.

Example 2 demonstrates a similar trend. American English adopts a controlled assurance, whereas British English intensifies the message by promising to turn the person’s life into a “living hell”. The language variations can be attributed to specific linguistic preferences and cultural contexts. British English subtitles, in reflection of their cultural norms, values, and more substantial censorship, often resort to indirect and euphemistic language. Common practice includes substituting explicit swear words with softer alternatives, such as using “bloody” instead of a harsher expletive (Ljung, 2010), or employing phrases like “taking the mickey” as a gentler expression for mocking (Hughes, 2015).

In contrast, American English subtitles, reflecting a culture valuing assertiveness and individualism, are generally straightforward. This transparency can lead to the perception of being confrontational or aggressive, especially by non-American audiences. The explicit nature of American English may ensure a more accurate representation of the original language but risks potential misinterpretations.

The higher degree of censorship in British English may impact the information relayed, altering the intensity of the original expressions and possibly leading to misunderstanding. As seen in Example 1, using the word ‘masculine’ in British English subtitles may fail to convey the same intensity of taunt and aggression as ‘boy’ in American English. Similarly, in Example 2, the British version’s less explicit language might convey a different level of disdain or mockery, potentially hindering the complete understanding of the message.

In essence, American and British subtitles’ differences are shaped by their cultural and linguistic backgrounds. American English, known for its informality and directness (Kovecses, 2000; Rohdenburg & Schlüter, 2009), contrasts with British English’s characteristic reserve and indirectness. Such cultural variations inevitably influence the subtlety and intensity of the conveyed messages in interlingual subtitling, particularly concerning sensitive issues like bullying.

4.2. Insult

Insult language can be described as using words, phrases, or expressions intended to harm, belittle, or disrespect another person (Jay & Janschewitz, 2008). This form of language can exert power and control over others and is often associated with aggressive behavior and social dominance. Insult language can include various verbal attacks, including name-calling, mocking, and put-downs. The categorization of pragmatic shifts has shed light on the fact that the communicative power of a bullying language is typically either flattened, accentuated, or maintained by substituting the offensive language with its equivalent in the target language. Moreover, given the specific nature of the pragmatic shift in translation, subtitlers can employ various direct and indirect adaptive tactics to euphemize and censor insults on the screen. The strategies encompass neutralization, which involves the process of harmonizing a specific cultural or emotional aspect of the message in the translation; substitution, which entails the development of novel communicative forms that evoke comparable emotions and perceptions in the target audience as those of the original message; and stylistic amplification, a deliberate reinforcement of the source text expression by the translator, enhancing the overall impact of the message. These approaches enable a coherent and comprehensible transmission of content within the target language while maintaining fidelity to the source material’s emotional and cultural nuances (Sevastiuk, 2021).

Table 2. Insult expressions utilized to indicate instances of bullying

No	ST Jordanian Vernacular	TT American Subtitles	TT British Subtitles
3	أصلاً كيف بدك. تعرفي! أنت وحببتين الكرز اللي طالعينك. ويا دوب ميينين. انت أصلاً ليه لابسة bra انه مفكرة راح	Having those tiny little boobs and all...Why are you wearing a bra anyway?	[chuckles] How could you anyway, with those two tiny cherries you have? -I mean, they’re barely visible. -Why

	تصير معجزة ويكبروا جواتك .boom	Hoping they'll magically grow into it?	are you even wearing a bra? Do you think that wearing it is going to make them magically get bigger? -[laughs] -Boom.
4	بدك حدا يساعدك؟ لحقي حالك قبل ما تبيللي الساحة.	You need help? Hurry up, Dina...	Go sort yourself out before you make a mess.

Table 2 demonstrates insult expressions of bullying. Upon examining Examples 3 and 4, it can be noted that American interlingual subtitles are more straightforward in their use of insulting language. In contrast, British interlingual subtitles tend to be less offensive. For instance, in example 3, the American subtitles use the word “boobs,” a slang term for breasts, and considered vulgar in some contexts. In contrast, the British subtitles use the word “cherries,” a less explicit metaphor for breasts. Furthermore, American subtitles use the phrase “magically grow into it,” which suggests a degree of taunt and condescension, while British subtitles use the word “boom,” a humorous way of conveying the same sentiment. In Example 4, American subtitles use a straightforward technique, while British subtitles use a euphemism by saying “sort yourself out” instead of “hurry up” to convey the same meaning.

Regarding censorship, British subtitles are more censored than American subtitles by utilizing neutralization in their use of insulting language. This is evident in the euphemistic approach that the British subtitles take, which often downplays the severity of the insult. However, this censoring may not necessarily affect the delivery of information, as the context of the insult and its intent can still be conveyed effectively.

4.3. Taunt

A taunt, as defined by (Ruch & Proyer, 2009), is a remark or gesture intended to provoke, mock, or ridicule someone. It insults or belittles the target, often undermining their confidence or inducing emotional distress (Hawker & Boulton, 2000). Verbal or nonverbal taunts may incorporate sarcasm, teasing, or other forms of derision. Additionally, taunting expressions emphasize criticism, mitigate a critical intent, and harmonize the effect of praise. Nevertheless, translating these taunt expressions in subtitles presents a considerable challenge for translators (Pedersen, 2005), as they represent a form of implicit communication that subverts the ostensible message.

Subtitling presents numerous obstacles for translators, including conveying expressions precisely in the target language while considering the standardized form of the subtitling (Anggraini et al., 2020). The relevance of subtitling obstacles to taunting in bullying lies in the difficulty of conveying sarcastic expressions accurately in the target language. Due to the subtlety and complexity of the taunt, translating taunts can be challenging. This can lead to potential misinterpretations or misunderstandings of the intended purpose, particularly in bullying language, where taunts may undermine or belittle the targeted individual. It is crucial for translators to be aware of these difficulties and develop effective strategies to accurately convey taunts and other nuances of language in subtitling.

Table 3. Taunt expressions utilized to indicate instances of bullying

No	ST Jordanian Vernacular	TT American Subtitles	TT British Subtitles
5	هلاً سؤال! أنت كل يوم لما تصحي الصبح بتحاولي تبيني حسن صبي. ولا هاد وضعك الطبيعي؟ زنة	Tell me, do you wake up every morning trying to look like a boy. or are you a boy?	I have a question. So, when you drag yourself out of bed, does the masculine look come naturally or do you have to try really hard?
6	شو الزفت اللي عم تاكليها؟ مطحنة شغالة؟ ارحمينا.	What the hell are you eating? What are you, a frigging grinder? Enough already.	Why are you stuffing your face? I mean, seriously, Dina, stop eating.

Table 3 represents taunt expressions to show instances of bullying. When comparing Examples 5 and 6 above, one can notice significant differences in tone, wording, and degree of censorship between the American and British English subtitles. In Example 5, the American subtitles use direct and confrontational language to snark the recipient, implying they attempt to look like a boy. On the other hand, the British subtitles use more subtle language, posing the question of whether the masculine look comes naturally or requires effort, thus implying that the recipient is not inherently masculine. Furthermore, using the word “drag” adds a degree of taunt, indicating that the character’s appearance is contrived and unnatural. Similarly, in Example 6, the American subtitles use explicit and profane language to insult the character’s eating habits, using the word “hell” and “frigging” to add emphasis. The British subtitles use less direct language in the same instance, simply asking why the character is “stuffing their face” and requesting that they stop eating.

4.4. Rumors

Rumors, as a form of bullying language, can be defined as unverified or unconfirmed statements or stories about an individual or group intended to damage their reputation or social relationships (Kessel Schneider et al., 2012). Rumor often involves spreading malicious information or unfounded accusations and can severely affect the victim’s social and emotional well-being. They can be especially damaging to adolescents, as they are often circulated within peer groups and social networks, amplifying their impact, and perpetuating negative stereotypes and social exclusion.

Table 4. The use of rumors as a theme of bullying

No	ST Jordanian Vernacular	TT American Subtitles	TT British Subtitles
7	وعشان تكمل لما تنفست بوجهي! ريحة معفنة! فار ميت بثمها.	And to make matters worse, when she came closer to me, her breath reeked! As if there was a dead rat in her mouth.	And as if that wasn’t bad enough, she was breathing right in my face. -And her breath smelt so, so bad! -[girls exclaiming] [Layan] It was like a rat had died in her mouth.

8	يع شو القرف هاد! أنت ايمتى أخرة مرة تحممتي؟ على العيد! عمرك سمعتي عن اشي اسمه !ريحتك جد طالعة shower	Yuck, you stink! When was the last time you took a shower? During Eid? Have you ever heard of showering? You really stink.	[sniffs] What's that smell? Heard of personal hygiene? I guess not. [indistinct chuckling] When was the last time you took a shower? You stink.
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Table 4 reveals the use of rumors as a theme of bullying. Examples 7 and 8 show that American subtitles seem more censored than British ones. In Example 7, American subtitles use euphemisms to tone down the offensive language, while British subtitles are more natural and use the word “smelt” instead of “reeked”. In Example 8, American subtitles utilize “stink” instead of the more offensive “smell bad” in the Jordanian vernacular. The British subtitles use “personal hygiene” to imply that the person is unclean but avoid using “stink”.

Using literal translation as a censoring technique may affect the delivery of the bullying language as it may tone down the level of offense perceived by the viewer. In example 7, British subtitles use the phrase “like a rat had died in her mouth,” which is more descriptive and vivid than “dead rat in her mouth” in the American subtitles. British subtitles convey a stronger sense of disgust, which may affect the viewer’s perception of the bullying language used.

4.5. Deflecting with humor

Deflecting with humor expressions is a form of bullying language that involves using humor or sarcasm to avoid criticism or to deflect negative attention (Smith et al., 2015). This can be seen as a form of verbal aggression, as it can undermine the self-esteem and social status of the targeted individual. While humor can be used to cope with bullying, the use of humor to deflect criticism can also maintain social dominance and perpetuate a culture of bullying.

Table 5. Expressions deflecting with humor to transform bullying

No	ST Jordanian Vernacular	TT American Subtitles	TT British Subtitles
9	ظهرها وصدرها واحد. مسفقة.	There isn't much on that flat chest of hers to hurt.	She's completely flat, back and front!
10	محلاكي مس عبير. طالعة زي السكة.	Come on! Ms. Abeer, you look terrific! You look like a fish in the.. Not like a fish!	Over here! Look at you, Ms Abeer. You look like a shimmering fish. Not like a fish.

Table 5 represents expressions deflecting with humor to transform bullying. Deflecting and humorous language in interlingual subtitling is a common practice employed to convey the original meaning of a source text in a more palatable form. However, when dealing with bullying language, the subtitler must consider the cultural nuances and potential harm that the original text might cause in the target

language. In this case, the subtitling of Jordanian vernacular poses a particular challenge, as it contains expressions that might be deemed offensive or inappropriate in British and American English.

Example 9 shows a clear difference between American and British interlingual subtitling. The original Jordanian vernacular is subtitled in American English as “There isn’t much on that flat chest of hers to hurt,” which uses more euphemistic language to deflect the offensive nature of the comment. In contrast, the British subtitle’s “She’s completely flat, back and front” is plainer and uses an ironic tone to convey the insult. Similarly, the American subtitle in Example 10 uses humor to deflect the insult by saying “Come on! Ms. Abeer, you look terrific! You look like a fish in the... Not like a fish!” The British subtitle, on the other hand, adopts a more direct approach, “Over here! Look at you, Ms Abeer. You look like a shimmering fish. Not like a fish.” While the American subtitle uses indirect language and humor to deflect bullying, the British subtitle uses an ironic tone to convey the insult while minimizing the impact. However, both subtitling modes ultimately aim to convey the intended meaning of the source text in a way that is culturally acceptable and less harmful to the target audience.

5. Discussion

The current study presents an in-depth analysis of interpreting verbal bullying from Jordanian vernacular into English, focusing on five distinct categories: threats, insults, taunts, rumors, and humor used as a deflective mechanism. This examination illuminates different patterns in applying diverse conversational techniques within the frame of British and American English interlingual subtitles.

It emerges that American English translations exhibit a predilection for a more direct and overt approach. This mirrors the sociolinguistic trend observed in American English towards assertiveness and individuality, reflecting a culture that values transparency and forthrightness (Algeo, 2009; Kovecses, 2000). In contrast, British English translations lean towards a more understated approach, preferring nuanced and euphemistic language. Such a choice aligns with Britain’s cultural customs and values, indicating an interconnection between language and cultural norms (Hudson, 1996; Woods, 1984).

A clear divergence in the representation of threat expressions across the American and British English subtitles was noted. American English subtitles employ more direct and confrontational language, manifesting a cultural preference for forthrightness and explicitness (Tannen, 2005). However, British English subtitles veer towards a more tactful usage of language. The choice for subtlety is achieved through euphemisms, indirect expressions, or refined vocabulary (Allan & Burridge, 2006; Hughes, 2015), thereby reducing the apparent severity or harshness of the threat. However, the straightforwardness of American English subtitles may result in a more accurate depiction of the original language but may risk appearing confrontational or aggressive to the audience.

Insult expressions follow a similar pattern, with American subtitles favoring a more explicit approach while British subtitles choosing a more restrained, euphemistic approach. This aligns with each culture’s unique linguistic preferences and norms, underlining the complex interplay between language, culture, and societal values (Debbas & Haider, 2020; Kasper & Rose, 2002). British subtitles demonstrate a higher degree of censorship, which is apparent in the neutralization of insulting language. This practice resonates with the British cultural preference for modesty and understatement

(Hughes, 2015). However, this approach may occasionally obfuscate the insult's original meaning or intent, necessitating additional contextual understanding (Allan & Burrige, 2006).

The analysis of taunting expressions demonstrated a significant difference between American and British English subtitles. The American subtitles were direct and confrontational, using explicit language to provoke or mock the recipient (Tannen, 2005). In contrast, the British subtitles took a more indirect approach, employing softer language. The degree of censorship is crucial in conveying the intended severity of the taunt, with the British subtitles potentially mitigating the level of aggression expressed in the original taunt (Allan & Burrige, 2006).

A noteworthy contrast was observed in the representation of rumor expressions. American subtitles were censored, employing euphemisms to tone down the offensive language (Abu-Rayyash et al., 2023; Jay, 2009). In contrast, British subtitles adopted a more direct approach. This contrast counters the general tendency of British subtitles to use more indirect and euphemistic language in threats and insults. The subtlety of British English may be context-dependent rather than a consistent feature across all communicative instances (Mills, 2003).

Lastly, the study explored the usage of humor as a deflective tactic. British subtitles again showcased a higher degree of censorship, using irony to deliver the insult while minimizing its impact. In contrast, American subtitles leaned towards indirect language and humor to deflect bullying, which might align with the American cultural preference for humor as a conflict management tool (Boxer & Cortés-Conde, 1997). This difference indicates the complex nature of humor and its potential use as a mechanism to deflect criticism and mitigate harm. The use of indirect language and humor can lessen the offensive nature of the comments, hence functioning as a form of censorship (Attardo, 1993). This discussion reiterates the crucial role of cultural context and sensitivity in translating verbal bullying from one language to another.

6. Conclusion

This study investigated the influence of verbal bullying language within audio-visual materials, explicitly examining the representation of bullying language in the Jordanian Netflix show *AlRawabi School for Girls*. Furthermore, the study explored the role of British and American English interlingual subtitling as tools for regulating the subtitled AV content aimed at adolescent viewers. Through a qualitative research approach using an aligned parallel corpus of the source text and the target texts, the study has identified five distinct categories of bullying language: threat, insult, taunt, rumors, and deflecting with humor expressions and analyzed the subtitling practices employed to censor the delivery of the show's themes.

The study's findings suggest differences between the use of bullying language in American and British English subtitles. Specifically, the findings indicate that British English tends to employ more implicit and euphemistic expressions, while American English is often more straightforward in its use of language. This may be due to cultural differences and the specific norms and values associated with each language variety. Understanding these differences is essential for subtitlers and other language

professionals, as it can inform their decisions when translating and adapting content for different audiences.

Additionally, these findings have implications for how we understand and address the issue of bullying, as cultural and linguistic factors may play a role in perpetuating this form of aggression. The findings also highlight the urgent need for effective regulations to minimize the negative impact of bullying language on adolescent viewers. The study has limitations, including using a single TV show and focusing on British and American English interlingual subtitling. Nonetheless, the insights provided by this study contribute to the ongoing discourse on the portrayal of bullying language in media and its potential implications for media censorship policies and practices.

It is recommended that future research considers a broader range of AV materials and subtitling practices to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the role of subtitling practices in regulating media content. Eventually, this study's contributions have implications for media regulators, subtitlers, and content creators to ensure that AV materials targeting adolescent viewers are appropriately regulated and free from bullying language.

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the authors.

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Developing Intercultural Communication and Cultural Intelligence through Intercultural Musical Contacts

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Abstract

This article presents a scientific recording of a two-term intercultural musical experience that took place in October 2018 and March 2019 in a high school in Beaune la Rolande, France. It explores the crucial role that music can play in developing and strengthening intercultural communication (IC) and cultural intelligence (CI), specifically in intercultural educational contexts. To achieve this and drawing on Allport's (1956) Contact Hypothesis Theory (CHT) and Bennett's (1953) Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS), a qualitative research design was chosen, with focus group discussions; involving participating students, and semi-structured interviews with three teachers and the high school principal as the main techniques for data collection. The thematic content analysis of the data resulted in the emergence of six main themes: Anxiety/Scepticism, Resistance, Discovery, Appreciation, Openness, and Transformation. The findings of the study concretely demonstrated that exposure to foreign music could have a tangible impact on students' development of intercultural communication and cultural intelligence skills.

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1. Introduction

Among the challenges and the new demands of the globalized contemporary world, intercultural communication (IC) and cultural intelligence (CI) are vital concerns that continue to attract scholars and specialists' interest. This has been justified by the growing prominence given to "the exchange of cultural information between two groups of people with significantly different cultures" (Barnett, 1997, as cited in Cudykunst, 2003, p. 260) (IC), and the necessity "to interact effectively with others from different cultural backgrounds, or the outcomes of these interactions" (Shaffer & Miller, 2008, p.109) (CI). Correspondingly, there is an urgent need to initiate and create contexts, cultural initiatives and intercultural encounters that would help individuals and groups behave appropriately and effectively in culturally varied settings. The ultimate objective would be to facilitate an exit from one's cultural comfort zone and, hence, favor attitudes and values of openness, acceptance, and cultural appreciation. Rowe (2010, p. 218) explains, in this sense, that intercultural contexts help in "moving (in and) out of safe spaces, those which feel like home". Miettinen (2020, p. 27) argues, in the same vein, that the initial contribution of such encounters is to "encourage one to cross those boundaries and become more interculturally courageous". On her part, Sæther (2013, p. 37) adds that "the most fundamental learning takes place when comfort zones have to be abandoned as a consequence of intercultural collaboration". Following this perspective, intercultural encounters are seen to help achieve a fearless leap into the unfamiliar (Sæther, 2013). Individuals and groups are given the opportunity to transcend their pre-existing feelings of anxiety and skepticism towards 'other' cultures. They become culturally courageous, capable of transitioning from an initial cultural dissonance to a later intercultural consonance.

That said, the case of intercultural / educational musical contacts has been presented as an effective context for IC and CI development (Oehrle, 1996; Campbell, 2002; Ilari et al., 2013; Schippers, 2016; Dolloff, 2020). Students in these contacts are offered the possibility to question their views and pre-existing judgments about the 'others' music and culture and change their understanding of cultural difference. Oehrle (1996, p. 95) explains that "intercultural education through music is one way of raising people's level of tolerance for that which is different". She adds that it "could be the means of correcting those 'errant perceptions': a way of breaking down the barriers and prejudices which isolate one from the other" (Oehrle, 1996, p. 96). Similarly, Campbell (2002, p. 6) ponders that "music affords powerful (and beautiful) encounters" that concretely help in "steering students from bias and bigotry to tolerance, acceptance, and genuine respect" (p. 12). Ilari et al. (2013) argue that intercultural musical programs offer a tangible advantage by encouraging students to question and transcend cultural and ethnic stereotypes that they may have previously internalized, ultimately leading to personal transformation. Furthermore, Schippers (2016, p. 2) affirms that such initiatives "can be a highly effective way of eliminating musical prejudice before it even starts by demonstrating and experiencing different musical sounds and concepts without focusing on a single tradition". Dolloff (2020) asserts, within the same vision, that musical encounters help students in developing cultural humility.

1.1. Context of the study

It is within this perception that Morocco has engaged in various intercultural projects, primarily musical/ educational partnership programs, to assist Moroccan and partner countries' students in

exchanging and sharing cultural content. These projects aim to create IC and CI learning contexts through which values of acceptance, openness and cultural appreciation are encouraged and developed. The present study reflects on the particular case of the intercultural partnership between the Fez Meknes Region in Morocco and the Centre Val de Loire Region in France. This educational partnership, through its pilot event called *Arts aux Lyceens*, invites French and Moroccan high school students to discover and learn about the culture and arts of the two countries, specifically music and theatre. The two regions, Fez Meknes and Centre Val de Loire, regularly invite French and Moroccan interveners to convene workshops in both disciplines. Correspondingly, I was invited, as a professional musician, to pedagogically direct a two- term intercultural musical program. This initiative relates to the will of the Centre Val de Loire region to offer students the opportunity to open up new cultural vistas. This was justified, in fact, by an alarming diagnosis that pointed to the existence of real intercultural deficits. Students of Centre Val de Loire region were found to manifest tangible signs of cultural insensitivity and ignorance about “other” cultures, which obviously impact their intercultural knowledge, skills, competencies, and hence, their whole personalities.

At the heart of the intercultural/ musical exchange were rhythmic patterns, namely the Moroccan 6/8 and 12/8, in addition to the oriental typical 4/4 pattern, with two of its main variations: *The Baladi and the Ouahda*. The focus was also on songs, Moroccan (Andalusian music and contemporary songs) and Arabic, with selective texts that celebrate values of beauty, tolerance, openness and acceptance. The exchange program comprised theoretical lessons, listening sequences, and specifically open workshops that put into practice the notions being learned. Choral singing was the main technique opted for to ensure effective group work. In this regard, students were invited to sing in Moroccan *Darija* and classical Arabic, and more importantly, to rhythmically accompany their singing by playing on some of the Moroccan and Arabic percussion instruments such as *derbouka*, *tar* and *taarija*. The choices of 6/8, 12/8 and 4/4 rhythms were justified by the fact that French music, be it classical or modern, comprises similar patterns, though with a different distribution of weak and strong beats. The latter similarity was seen by the researcher to be a facilitating factor for the successful learning of Moroccan and Arabic rhythms. Moreover, reliance on singing was because “songs consist of music, language, and cultural knowledge” (Ilari et al., p. 203). More importantly, “singing might be an optimal activity to foster cultural understanding because songs offer a means to talk about different peoples” (Ilari et al., p. 203).

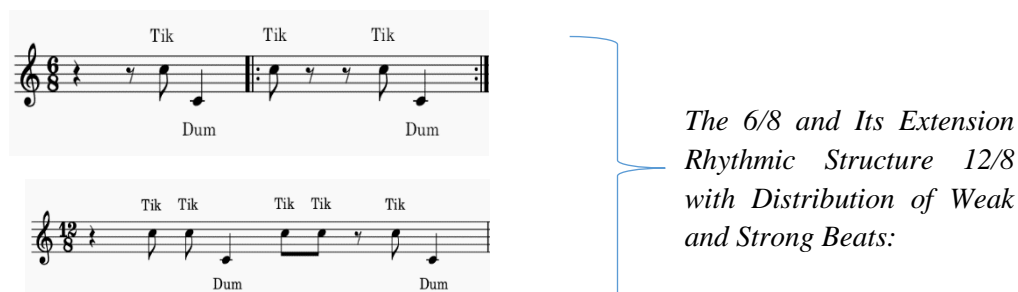


Figure 1. Examples of Moroccan typical rhythms

The present study is, then, inscribed within this intercultural reciprocity that relates Morocco to France. It stands as a scientific recording of the intercultural inputs and outputs regarding the musical encounter that took place at *Le Lycée Agricole* of Beaune la Rolande in October 2018 and March 2019.

1.2. Statement of the problem

This musical/intercultural experience revealed certain tensions and dynamics. Students who participated in this two-term event showed two opposite reactions to the Moroccan/Arabic music: initial resistance and rejection that were transformed, by the end of the program, into amazing appreciation and acceptance. This attitudinal change was so interesting to the point that it provoked many questions that required reflection, exploration, and therefore, an empirical procedure to reach answers. This fueled the intervener's/researcher's curiosity and interest in scientifically approaching the students' remarkable shift. Following this perspective, the purpose of this narrative/phenomenological study was to describe, explore, and understand the "what", the "how", and the "why" of students' attitudinal change, with a specific regard for the role of music in stimulating and activating that change.

1.3. The rationale

The present study aimed to provide multi-layered contributions. The first one was to illustrate and prove the powerful role of music in developing IC and CI specifically in intercultural/musical encounters. Put differently, how musical interculturality in educational settings can effectively help students open "a window of learning opportunities" (Ilari et al., 2013, p. 205) that would, in turn, encourage them to "review multiple views of important aspects of daily life, such as religion, nature, and interpersonal relationships, but also ...many ways in which humans are alike". Accordingly, the second contribution was to demonstrate that music has the power to stimulate the "individual's ability to grasp and reason correctly in situations characterized by cultural diversity" (Ang & Van Dyne, 2015, p. 4). The third contribution of this study was to demonstrate that music, particularly through the intercultural perspective, can stand as an effective medium capable of bridging the cultural gaps between the 'I' and the 'Other', which in turn would instigate the maximization of mutual cultural understanding and proximity between the north and the south. At a different level, the fourth contribution of the study was to assess the eventual outputs of Morocco's intercultural partnerships. It is worth mentioning, in this sense, that though Morocco has been engaged in antecedent musical intercultural programs, little has been done to evaluate their outcomes, specifically their impact on participants' views, understanding, attitudes, and thus behavior towards the "other's" culture. As a matter of fact, very few local studies, if any, have been conducted to shed light on the role of music in building and solidifying participating students' IC and CI. Moreover, the fifth contribution of the present study was to enrich the existing literature on musical / intercultural encounters, specifically about Morocco and the Middle East/ North Africa (MENA) region. It is worth indicating, in this respect, that contrary to the abundant European and American literature on the "interculturalization of music" (Miettinen, 2020, p. 6), MENA studies on the topic, particularly in educational contexts tend to be hardly visible. Finally, the most important added value of this study was to demonstrate that music, particularly through the intercultural perspective, can stand for an effective tool in bridging cultural differences between the north and the south.

1.4. The researcher position

The researcher's role/position in the present study is related to three main levels. The first level regarded his status as a professional musician, the second one concerned his preoccupation with the enquiry process, and the third one touched upon his status as a cultural "outsider". The three levels divergently impacted the course of the study. The rich musical background covering Moroccan and international musical orientations, permitted a smooth communication with students, specifically when navigating through Moroccan and French musical repertoires. The investigative concern fueled the researcher's willingness to opt for effective methodological tools and strategies to reach valuable and credible findings. The "outsider" position, the most challenging level, imposed the consideration of both cultural and ethical aspects. In this respect, the researcher, having cross-cultural competence, tried to handle communication with both students and the administrative staff that was considerate and respectful of the norms of the host institution (culture). He also tried to maintain a maximum degree of awareness in relation to his pre-existing ideas and preconceptions regarding the "other", the French students in the present case. This was of great importance in keeping power relations at a balanced level. It is worth indicating, here, that intercultural exchange is basically "a site enmeshed in power relations" (Rowe, 2010, p. 216); therefore, a careful consideration of this dimension is a necessary component of these exchange arrangements: "Close attention to the webs of power we weave and into which we are woven renders visible the affective labor we invest into lives of others, and how that labor is constitutive of the selves we are becoming" (Rowe, 2010, p. 223).

Within this perspective, the nature of the questions (cultural dialogue) asked in the focus group and the way they were handled by the convenor followed a balanced line of power relations and thus an "egalitarian reciprocity" (Xu, 2013, p. 390) coupled with "an egalitarian universalism" (Benhabib, 2002, p. 5). On one hand, questions were linguistically simple and respected the general local cultural norms. They basically targeted the understanding of students' attitudinal shift. On the other hand, the debate in the focus group was open, and students were free to react and convey their viewpoints and remarks. The same was true for interviews with the administrative staff. The researcher's role was mainly that of a moderator.

This study was guided by three research questions:

1. What stage (s) of intercultural sensitivity did students' manifest at their first contact with the Moroccan /Arabic music?
2. How did the musical encounter encourage students to step out of their cultural comfort zone?
3. What promising signs of IC and CI did students manifest at the end of the musical experience?

2. Theoretical and conceptual framework

This study was framed by four fundamental constructs and theories: intercultural communication, cultural intelligence, the developmental model of intercultural sensitivity (DMIS), and the Contact hypothesis theory (CHT). These theories share the common principle of moving from ignorance and a state of denial and rejection to an attitude of appreciation and acceptance.

2.1. Intercultural communication

Intercultural Communication is a construct generally defined as communication across cultures. However, IC has been associated with various conceptualizations that insist on its complexity as a process of negotiating meanings through cultural variance. Within this assumption, Eisenschlas and Trevaskes (2007, p. 416) consider it as “a process of negotiation across individuals and groups”. Besides, Stewart (1974, as cited in Saral, 1977, p. 289) presents the concept as “communication which occurs under conditions of cultural difference-language, values, customs, and habit”. On his part, Novinger (2001, p. 13) conceives IC as “cultural variance in the perception of social objects and events”. This definition tends to be more relevant, specifically regarding the experience reported in this study, in the sense that it basically describes a cultural (musical) information exchange.

2.2. Cultural intelligence

Most scholars' definitions of CI rely on the core idea of behaving effectively in a culturally different context (Peterson, 2004; Livermore, 2011; Ang & Van Dyne, 2015). Cultural intelligence allows one to adopt an appropriate attitude and, thus, exhibit congruous behavior within a different cultural setting. According to Ang and Van Dyne (2015), CI refers to an individual's ability to function and successfully navigate diverse cultural environments. Livermore (2011) expands on this definition, stating that CI involves efficiently operating in various cultural contexts, including ethnic, generational, and organizational cultures. Besides, Peterson (2011) defines CI as the capacity to shift from a thought pattern of believing one's own perspective is the only valid one to recognizing the existence of other valid ways of seeing and engaging with life.

Cultural intelligence is presented by many scholars to be a multidimensional, multifactor construct founded on four basic levels: the cognitive, the meta cognitive, the motivational, and the behavioral (Livermore, 2011; Ott & Michailova, 2018; Earley & Ang, 2003). The first level focuses on “knowledge about how cultures are similar and different” (Livermore, 2011, p. 7). The second one relates to “how an individual processes and uses” this knowledge (Ott & Michailova, 2018, p. 4). It occurs when “you make judgments about your own thought processes and those of others” (Livermore, 2011, p. 7). The third level reflects one's ability to acknowledge and comprehend a culture while also feeling compelled to interact with others in unfamiliar environments (Earley & Ang, 2003). And the fourth level, the behavioral, concerns the “capability to adapt your behavior appropriately for different cultures. It involves having a flexible repertoire of responses to suit various situations while remaining true to yourself” (Livermore, 2011, p. 7).

2.3. The developmental model of intercultural sensitivity

Created by Bennett (1953) and founded on ethnocentric and ethnorelative stages, the DMIS model aims to explain the stages through which intercultural sensitivity is built (Bennett & Bennett, 1993). In the ethnocentric stages, namely Denial, Defense, and Minimization, “one’s own culture is experienced as central to reality in some way” (Bennett & Bennett, 2004, p. 152), implying a personal incapability to recognize the existence of “other”, “equal” different cultures. In these stages, individuals and organizations tend to draw an “imaginary” line of cultural similarities to “minimize” cultural differences (Bennett & Hammer, 2017). Yet, this only aggravates the “us” / “them” divide. In the ethnorelative stages, namely Acceptance, Adaptation, and Integration, one experiences “all cultures as alternative ways of organizing reality” (Bennett & Hammer, 2017, p. 3). Hernandez and Kose (2012, p. 516) explain, within this vision, that cultural differences are approached with curiosity and respect, and behavioral change is strongly encouraged “to effectively interact with people from another culture”. The two scholars add that the ultimate level of ethnorelative stages is the development of an inclusive identity “that is not based in any one culture”. It is worth pointing out that reliance on this theory was justified by the need for a consistent theoretical framework that can elucidate the evolution from one phase to another (Bennett & Hammer, 2017).

2.4. Contact hypothesis theory

Initiated in 1956 by Allport, Contact Hypothesis Theory (CHT) has been “a high- profile and much-researched theory” in the field of IC and attitude change (Dörnyei & Csizér, 2005, p. 328). Also known as Intergroup Contact Theory, its main argument is founded on the idea that direct contact “changes the attitudes and behavior of groups and individuals toward one another and, in turn, those changes will influence any further contact (Dörnyei & Csizér, 2005, p. 328). However, this expected attitude change is related to four main conditions: equal status, intergroup cooperation, common goals, and support by social and institutional authorities.

3. Method

3.1. Design

The present study was founded on a qualitative method that aimed to describe, explore and understand students’ attitudinal change, with special focus on the role of music in facilitating that change. The choice of this method was due to the socio- phenomenological aspect of the studied musical intercultural experience and the attitudinal implications it brought about. In this sense, Mahajan (2018, p. 2) explains that the qualitative approach “is exploratory and seeks to explain ‘how’ and ‘why’ a particular social phenomenon, or program, operates as it does in a particular context”. Correspondingly, “it aims to provide a detailed understanding into human behavior, emotion, attitudes, and experiences (Tong et al., 2012, as cited in Mahajan, 2018, p. 2).

Following this reasoning, the objective of the present study was essentially to conduct an “empirical inquiry into the meaning” students derived from their experience (Shank, 2002, as cited in Ospina, 2004, p. 2). In this context, the word “empirical” refers to an inquiry that is “grounded in the world of

experience” (Ospina, 2004, p. 2). As stated by Mahajan (2018, p. 2), “qualitative researchers are interested in people’s belief, experience, and meaning systems from the perspective of the people”. Therefore, their main work is done through “the observations and interpretations of people’s perception of different events in a natural setting” (Gentles et al., 2015, as cited in Mahajan, 2018, p. 2).

3.2. Participants and sampling

Twenty second-year baccalaureate male students attended the musical intercultural program, primarily chosen by the high school administration. Out of these students, ten, ranging in age from 15 to 17 years old, took part in the focus group discussions. Their selection was based on convenient sampling and influenced by three main reasons. First, they exemplified the behavioral change observed at the end of the musical program. Second, they showed willingness to participate in the study. And third, they were easily accessible as they were present in the high school at all times, unlike the other students.

These subjects had a unique aspect as they had never studied music nor been exposed to a “foreign” musical repertoire. It was their first introduction to such a course, particularly within an intercultural context. Furthermore, their musical background was primarily “western”.

The other participants were three of the students’ teachers and the high school principal. They participated in the study through interviews in which they expressed their visions, beliefs, expectations and attitudes regarding the importance of such musical intercultural encounters, specifically the contribution of musical “interculturality” in developing morals and values of openness, appreciation and acceptance of cultural differences. The selection of these four interviewees was justified by two main reasons: their consistent presence during rehearsals and the valuable feedback and insights they received from students about their impressions, emotions, and perceptions regarding the different stages of the experience.

3.3. Procedures

The process of data collection encompassed every moment and all the sessions of the two-term intercultural program. Ranging from observation and note-taking to focus group discussions, semi-structured interviews, and students’ mental maps, data collection strategies followed a deliberately balanced procedure. In this regard, at the first level, the researcher’s continuous observation of students’ actions and reactions formed the basis of many important ideas, remarks and impressions. These observations, along with systematic and careful note taking of their behavior, arguments, and counterarguments, served as primary sources of information. These two techniques were implemented using a pre-planned guide. The latter consisted of prompts, questions and specific instructions that were designed to spot and describe the important moments and sequences of the musical experience.

Throughout the exchange program, students exhibited inconsistent behaviors and feelings of indifference, appreciation, rejection, and acceptance that required close attention. The pre-planned guide was of great help, in this sense, in documenting their verbal and non-verbal reactions (Mulhall, 2003) and “the physical setting as well as accounts of particular descriptions of the observer’s behavior” (Muswazi & Nhamo, 2013, p. 13).

At the second level, focus group discussions with students and semi-structured interviews with their teachers constituted the core data collection tools of the study. The former technique, conducted twice in the rehearsal room immediately after the second term, lasted for one hour each session, providing an opportunity to approach students from a close and intimate perspective. The choice of focus group discussions was based on the fact that it “is an effective technique for gathering rich, in-depth accounts of people’s thinking, experiences, and attitudes” (Plummer, 2017, p. 350). It also helps “to produce concentrated amounts of data on precisely the topic of interest” (Morgan, 1997, p. 13). Following a predetermined question protocol consisting of pre-established questions designed to outline students’ attitudinal change, the focus group discussions elicited important ideas and themes that described and explained students’ attitudinal shift. Additionally, the second technique, interviews, was similarly conducted after the second term, and were of great importance as they allowed for a diverse recording of students’ dynamics. The responses from teachers and the high school principal to the different questions were particularly helpful in understanding students’ behavioral and emotional attitudinal changes. They provided highly credible feedback on students’ real sensations towards the “outsiders”, the musician, and the musical content of the intercultural program.

At the third level, students’ mental maps served as an additional data collection tool. They provided reliable written reflections and recordings of the different meanings students attributed to the musical experience at each stage. More importantly, they served as a platform for open interaction and expression, relatively free from power dynamics.

3.4. Data analysis

Thematic content analysis was the inductive method used in this study. It involved “readings of raw data to derive concepts” (Thomas, 2006, p. 238), and “analyzing transcripts, identifying themes within those data and gathering together examples of those themes from the text” (Brunard et al., 2008, p. 429). Importantly, within this approach, the researcher began by transcribing focus group discussions and interviews. The different answers and reactions were then coded using an initial “open coding” (Brunard et al., 2008, p. 430). This involved writing initial notes in the margins of the transcribed texts. Following this, after several meticulous readings, the researcher initiated a structuration process to identify significant words, expressions, and statements that directly related to the research’s initial problem and questions. This process aims to understand the interplay between individuals and the social context in which they operate. In other words, structuration is employed to uncover the complex relationship between individuals and the social structures that influence their thoughts and behavior. Following this procedure, key words were first identified based on their frequency of use. Then, general important ideas and trends were identified and reduced to a specific number of labelled categories. The final step involved converting the emerging categories into thematic units, which were used to write the final descriptive report.

Similarly, the same procedure was applied to the mental maps. The objective was to identify the key words and phrases that students systematically used to describe the meanings they attributed to the intercultural encounter. This facilitated the transition from “the particular or the detailed data... to the general codes and themes” (Creswell, 2011, p. 238). Important ideas and categories were identified in this process, which confirmed the themes reached during the analysis of interviews.

4. Results and discussion

The thematic content analysis of focus group discussions, interviews and students' mental maps resulted in the emergence of six major themes: Anxiety/Skepticism, Resistance, Discovery, Appreciation, Openness and Transformation. This sequence describes the process of attitudinal change that students participating in the musical intercultural event went through. It also explains how students progressively developed principles of IC and CI.

4.1. The theme of anxiety/skepticism

During the focus group discussions, particularly regarding the initial stages of the experience, students described various feelings of anxiety and skepticism towards the "other" Moroccan/ Arabic music. Their discussions about their expectations from this musical encounter revealed clear indications of "fear" and suspicion. Their responses included highly negative terms and expressions such as skeptical, horrible, anxious, and bad emotions:

Participant 1: we thought that things will be boring.

Participant 4: hum, yes, there were those who were skeptical at the beginning, they were asking: "we do not know the teacher! what is this music?". They asked questions about the "accent": "how can we master it? it is horrible!"

Students' answers also included other key terms such as "prejudgments", and a consistent use of the word "unknown":

Participant 3: hum...yes because before we had prejudgments on Arabic songs and all that.... but when we discovered it...things changed.

Participant 1: no, we have developed it, before we had prejudgments....and we were discovering it.....we all did not have the same idea.

Participant 4: yes, that's it. There are some students who say it jokingly, but there are others who were serious, and it was clear, they did not joke, hum ... they do not appreciate the "unknown".

These feelings of anxiety and skepticism were simultaneously raised through the semi-structured interviews conducted with the students' teachers and the high school principal. When asked about the idea of fearing "the other", teachers 1 and 2, for example, explained that it is a principal trait of their students when they are confronted with any aspect of a different culture, be it language, music, or dance. Teacher 1 further added that she had worked on intercultural exchange programs for many years, inviting participants from different countries with diverse backgrounds, and the diagnosis was almost always the same. These intercultural "encounters" were always preceded by agenuine skepticism. The high school principal confirmed these observations, arguing that the word "contact" itself may pose a challenge, particularly when it is associated with culture:

Teacher 1: yes, that is it. There are two aspects the cultural musical aspect, and the aspect of encountering someone who comes from a different country....to say the things as they are, we are in a rural environment, with no experiences of encountering people coming from the Maghreb...that is why they feel fear.

Teacher 1: yes, definitely.... and when we tell them that this music comes from another country, which is again far from their profile.... Here is the problem...more than that, they need to cross the Mediterranean. Here fear is at its peak.

Teacher 2: in fact, students we have here are students who come from relatively low social milieu, less opened at the cultural level ...this is a fact, they are actually students who rarely have the chance to approach other cultures, to go abroad and, thus, for them, there is a kind of novelty, a feeling of insecurity because of this encounter with foreign cultures, with foreign persons, but it is good since it would jostle them a little bit.

The principal: contact always poses problems.... when it is applied to culture, another challenge arises. For students, and considering their age and limited background, it is again more complicated, which justifies their reactions.

4.2. The theme of resistance

Resistance was a fundamental idea that both students and their teachers evoked, either implicitly or explicitly, through their respective answers. The first indication of this resistance was the lack of motivation. The initial stages of the musical experience were characterized by an apparent indifference, which was mostly expressed through passive verbal and non-verbal reactions. As a result, it was particularly challenging to get the students actively involved in the various activities. Creating a comfortable intercultural learning environment required significant time and intense efforts. the students' responses during the focus group discussion provided tangible evidence of this:

Participant 4: there were some students who did not want to sing in another language ...

Participant 4: hum, ... I think they were not interested in another language, which is Arabic ...

Participant 2: we had no motivation to learn ... to tell you the truth.

The second indication of resistance was an explicit aspect of close-mindedness. When attempting to initiate a discussion about Moroccan and Arabic music, its history, and its specific characteristics, students clearly showed signs of disinterest and a lack of willingness to try to learn about it. This close-minded attitude reached its peak when, during rehearsals, students would stop singing once there was a switch from French language to Arabic:

Participant 3: Ah! no, there were those who, when singing in French they are engaged, but once we started singing in Arabic they stop. The same thing for anthems. There are those who sang the French anthem but not the Moroccan one.

Teachers clearly raised this sense of conservatism and reject during the interviews:

Teacher 1: exactly, I would say that we have students, unfortunately, quite close-minded, quite less open-minded.

Teacher 3: yes, the beginnings were complicated, I mean the first sessions, hours, they said “oh, what is that?”

4.3. The theme of discovery

Feelings of anxiety and fear were gradually replaced by sensations of familiarity and ease with the advancement of work. It was truly amazing to notice how students started to show more attention and motivation, thus creating an atmosphere of comfort and positivity that characterized the end of the first term. Students’ reactions at that stage reflected a turning point in the experience. Importantly, within this new energy, the sense of discovery emerged as a key theme during the focus group discussion:

Participant 5: we were anxious in the beginning, but later, singing meant discovering, singing a new language, hum...It permitted ...new things: new melodies, new rhythms.

Participant 3: hum, yes because before we had prejudgments on Arabic songs, and all that but when we discovered it ...things got better.

This energy generated through “the discovery effect” was confirmed by teachers 1 and 2, who pointed out a positive sense of discovery that led to a clear evolution at the end of the first term. This signaled the first step in the deconstruction of pre-existing judgements that considered Moroccan and Arabic music as “foreign”, “strange”, and even “unsophisticated”:

Teacher 2: ... I noticed it at the end of the final session of the first term, they were all really happy.... they changed their minds.... when you were leaving, they did not want that, they were asking for selfies....

Teacher 2: yes, I have discussed with them, after the first term, and frankly, what they have said about that first term they have spent with you ... “how good it was, we have learnt a lot of things, have you noticed that Madame? We are capable to sing in Arabic, to practice Moroccan rhythms”

4.4. The theme of appreciation

The focus group discussion revealed signs of advancement from discovery to appreciation. Aspects of this positive shift could be traced through the way students started to talk about specific components of Moroccan and Arabic music, such as melody, lyrics, and rhythm. For example, in response to a question about the elements they liked more in the songs they were introduced to, their answers were very pertinent:

Participant 4: I would say the melody.... hum.... the lyrics if I can understand them...yes, we had actually the translation of the texts, hum, but more importantly, the melody.

Participant 9: for me the melody, the rhythm is good, and the lyrics, later... the mixture of the three elements is good, I liked it.

This attitude of appreciation was empowered by an additional feeling of pride that students started to manifest once they realized that they were part of a project that aimed to bridge two different cultures and two musical genres:

Participant 9: yes! it was a question of showing to others the things we were able to realize... we feel really proud, so proud of what we accomplished.

Participant 6: yeh! the work on language, all the pronunciations, learning sentence by sentence, with the appropriate rhythm, and to show by the end that it had a good result.

4.5. The theme of openness

Openness was the most important theme that emerged from the data content analysis. It reflected the cognitive, motivational, and most importantly, the behavioral changes that students started to show at the end of the first term, throughout the second term, and particularly during preparations for the final two concerts. When asked about their “new” attitudes towards what they previously considered “different” and “unknown”, students responded in a way that portrayed the “new” behavior they were developing:

Participant 9: I liked it; I would like to go to Morocco to discover this new culture.

Participant 4: The same thing for me, I would like to go to Morocco to look for the origins of this music, its rhythms and melodies. It is always good to approach things, to listen to this music, in their original context.

The students’ amazing willingness to make the final concerts a real success was another important indicator of their attitudinal change. Their insistence on going through “very serious” rehearsals to avoid possible mistakes, in addition to their awareness that the concert should be a true reflection of the exchange program’s main theme- the bridging of the Moroccan and French cultures- epitomized the extraordinary transformation they were undergoing:

Participant 4: we need to pay attention to the lyrics, not to make mistakes.

Participant 5: the important thing is how to associate the concert’s theme with the songs we will be performing. We will sing two different cultures ...that is amazing!

Along the same lines, teachers’ feedback in the interviews also evoked the open-minded thinking that their students were remarkably developing. Teacher 1 considered “openness” to be the supreme objective of intercultural experiences, a noticeable trait that was progressively acquired and manifested by participants specifically at the psychological and behavioral levels:

Teacher 1: I have found that fantastic, I was really touched, and that was clearly reflected on their faces.... that openness is also deciphered through their behavior; hum... we could notice it through their smiling, and their posture...

At a different level, students’ mental maps, such as the one in figure 2, a brainstorming post-work technique that was used to explore participants’ personal perception of the added value attained

through the musical experience, also included key words and expressions that meaningfully denote the value of openness: new language, new way of singing, discovery of music, new friends, new culture, etc. All these terms implied the “new” mindset students were developing.

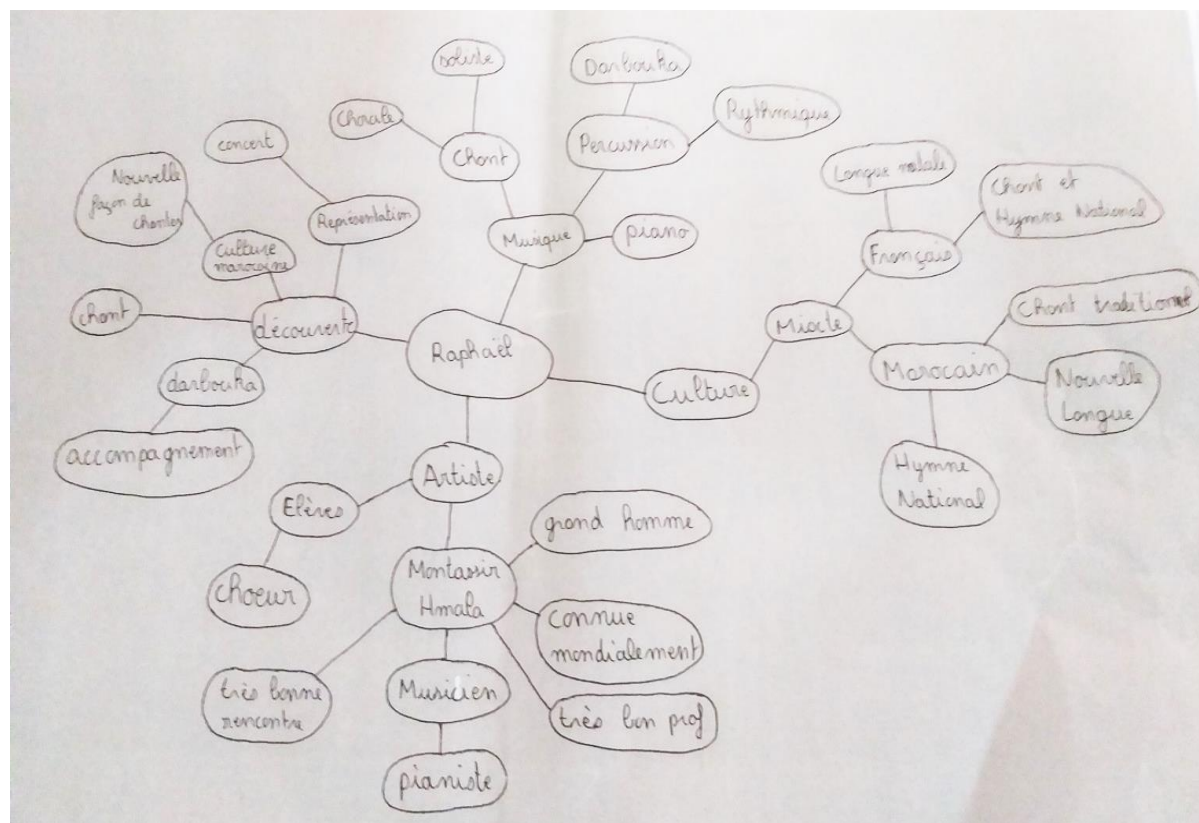


Figure 2. An example of students’ mental maps

4.6. The theme of transformation

Transformation was the key title that best described and personalized the outcomes of the intercultural musical experience. Students, both at the psychological and behavioral levels, manifested a clear change. They were, in fact, developing real senses of IC and CI. Teachers’ reactions concretely captured this evolution:

Teacher 1: and then, they confront their stereotypes and prejudgments with reality, and this is very important. And here clearly, I have noticed a transformation in students.

Teacher 2: yes, I have noticed so many things. I was totally amazed. Students’ transformation at various levels: the first one is that you succeeded in making them sing, and that was a real challenge, I think that they themselves were surprised regarding their own capacity to sing, to practice a different music.

Teacher 3: yes, there is also this aspect regarding their initial attitude, they were transformed in their way of considering “the other”, abroad, the foreign culture, and it was reflected through their behavior ...I noticed it at the end of the final session of the first term, they were all really happy...when you were leaving, they did not want that.

The findings of this study confirmed the positive correlation between music interculturality, and the development of IC and CI. As described in the findings section, students, through their exposure to the Moroccan / Arabic “foreign” musical repertoire, actively re-evaluated their previous perspectives on other cultures and music. This process was a crucial step in developing a heightened awareness and appreciation for a completely different style of music. Students demonstrated an ability to step outside their cultural comfort zones, indicating a willingness to transition from musical ethnocentrism and cultural exclusivity (Reimer, 2009) to cultural relativism.

The unique melodic, rhythmic (as shown in Figure 1), and textual aspects of Moroccan / Arabic music were proven to be powerful tools in stimulating their interest in exploring and learning “valuable” alternative musical expressions. The course of events showcased that music serves as “a vehicle for knowing culture, a way to understand the self, the other, and the relationships between them” (Campbell, 2017, p. 10). At a deeper level, this study yielded intriguing conclusions.

The reactions, tensions and emotions witnessed throughout the exchange program showed that, despite living in a globalized world where physical and cultural boundaries are believed to be transcended, there is still an essential need for intercultural exchanges. Indeed, the association between “me” and the “other”, with its superior/ inferior complex, remains an inevitable characteristic of our cotemporary world. The current musical context demonstrated that the musical and cultural specificities cannot be disregarded. Undeniably, “people within cultures and between cultures often speak of ‘our music’ and ‘their music’” (Elliott, 1989, p. 1). This is precisely what the students conveyed in the first term of the intercultural program. They did not “immediately understand, appreciate, or enjoy the music of other cultures” (Elliott, 1989, p. 11). Their initial resistance revealed that “ours and theirs...is pervasive in our lives and identities, and in our music as well” (Elliott, 1989, p. 107). Given this reality, achieving the globalization of culture, unlike the economy, seems to be an unpractical objective or “dream”. What can be envisioned, therefore, is the development of sustainable intercultural mechanisms and plans that would help individuals and groups engage in processes of discovery of and dialogue with the “other”. This would significantly contribute to maximizing cultural understanding and appreciation, ultimately narrowing the gap between the “me” and the “other”.

Intercultural musical contact would be very useful in this sense. The present study revealed that musical encounters, specifically in educational settings, offer students potential opportunities to learn new ways of approaching cultural differences. More importantly, interaction with different music proved to be effective in transforming those differences into a source of cultural richness, similarity, and complementarity. It is worth pointing out that the transition outside of the comfort zone significantly helped students abandon their narrowed worldview. Their encounter with “a cultural outsider” (Miettinen, 2020, p. 14), who invited them to learn about an outsider music /culture, created an unpleasant feeling of unfamiliarity and cultural discomfort. However, this contact was highly productive (Kallio & Westerlund, 2020). Students progressively relinquished their “narcissistic belief” (Alfred et al., p. 226), and their initial hesitation and anxiety, instead embracing a sense of “reflection

and reflexivity” (Miettinen, 2020, p. 27) on the outsider music as well as their own music. This, in turn, facilitated the transition from ethnocentric stages of denial and defense to ethnorelative stages of acceptance and integration.

From a different perspective, students’ attitude change at the end of the intercultural experience tangibly validates the principals of Allport’s (1956) CHT theory on the effects of intercultural contact on participants and how it “changes the attitude and behavior of groups towards one another” and, in turn, how “those changes will influence any further contact” (Dörnyei & Csizér, 2005, p. 328). Musical contact was proven to help reduce epistemological distances and reach the “epistemic unfreezing” (Tadmor et al., 2012). The initial sense of confrontation that students exhibited due to their belief that they were encountering an “unknown” music gradually transformed into a positive attitude, which later developed into an appreciation of the content and motivation to participate in the second term. This motivation took a further step toward increased engagement and participation in all the sessions of the second term. All activities were characterized by regular attendance, concrete enthusiasm, and a determination to make the final two concerts a true celebration of cultural relativism, a festivity of cultural difference, and a specific invitation to discover Moroccan Arabic music.

These attitude changes indicated clear signs of willingness and motivation to participate in any other musical experiences. Students’ abandonment of their prior prejudices and stereotypes reflects their newly developing mindset and, therefore, their flexible and open thinking. The present intercultural experience was an extraordinary context that led to “reconstructing others’ frames of reference” (Alfred et al., 2003, p. 228).

Additionally, the course and the findings of the present study interestingly demonstrated the existence of unbalanced cultural power relations that link the west to the global south. The reasons behind the reception of the researcher (musician) in a French high school can be attributed to the intercultural deficits that French students face. The unbalance lies in the fact that while the cultural outsider possesses the necessary musical knowledge about French music to establish smooth communication with students, the latter have no knowledge of Moroccan and Arabic music. This suggests that more efforts should be invested to address this situation, particularly on the part of the west, and the “Arts aux Lyceens” project can serve as an example to be replicated and enhanced.

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Watching Videos and Foreign Language Acquisition: Formulaic Sequences in Focus

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Abstract

The added value of subtitles for learning a language in out-of-classroom settings has been the focus of some scholars over recent years. However, there have only been a handful of attempts at examining the effectiveness of viewing subtitled materials when it comes to incidental learning of vocabulary. The lack of research in the Iranian context is particularly noticeable. Understanding the fact that single words, along with formulaic sequences are essential to language learning, this article offers insights into the incidental learning/acquisition of formulaic chunks and single words among a sample of Iranian students of English who watch the same English full-length TV episode in three conditions: with English subtitles (intralingual subtitles), Persian subtitles (interlingual subtitles) and no subtitles. The study followed a pre-test/post-test between-subject design with a control group. The findings suggested that audiovisual input, regardless of the modality (Persian subtitles or English subtitles) had a positive effect on the participants' overall achievement.

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1. Introduction

Using audiovisual materials for language learning has been a representation of oral communication in real settings (Herrero & Vanderschelden, 2019), a topic of interest to researchers since the early 1980s (Price, 1983). With the exponential growth in the volume of audiovisual content such as films and TV series, the role of cinematic products in language learning has become a major research topic in both vocabulary studies and translation studies (e.g., McLoughlin et al., 2020; Teng, 2021). Thanks to the advancement in technology and technological tools, audiovisual material—accessible through various platforms like television, on-demand streaming services, and YouTube—have been accredited with being rich, authentic, and invaluable, offering a myriad of real-life situations and circumstances for learning a language (see Bednarek, 2018). Research so far has shown that watching any form of subtitled videos meaningfully contributes to vocabulary acquisition (Reynolds et al., 2022).

Repetitive natural encounters with language inputs through films or TV series, otherwise known as incidental learning, can lead to receptive vocabulary learning. In terms of formulaic sequences, which is the focus of the present work, empirical research far beyond the Iranian context (Puimège & Peters, 2019, 2020; Pujadas & Muñoz, 2019) has shown that exposure to audiovisual content facilitates incidental learning. The benefit of audiovisual or cinematic productions over other forms of language input “lies in the fact that audio is supported by imagery, and, on some occasions, different forms of on-screen text are present” (Durbahn, 2019, p. 76); therefore, this can boost or facilitate potential language gains, especially lexical development.

Oxford (1990) positions vocabulary as the most incommensurable integral of a language, whether a foreign language or mother tongue (Al Ghazali, 2006), and it has hence received more attention in recent decades. Subtitling has been investigated from various aspects (Khoshsaligheh, et al., 2017, 2019, 2020) including their use in language acquisition. As asserted by Parks (1994), subtitled materials may positively impact learners’ reading and listening comprehension, decoding skills, vocabulary acquisition, and recognition, as well as their overall motivation by lowering the affective filter (learning blockage) (Zanón, 2006). Vocabulary is best acquired unconsciously, without the attention being centered on language gains (Durbahn, 2019; Rodgers & Webb, 2020). This strategy has been called incidental learning, which is “deliberately leaving the acquisition of these words to potential natural encounters, with the hope of picking them up with or without even the conscious awareness of the learner when enough repetitions occur” (Gu, 2020, p. 275).

Lexical development has proven to be one of the main benefits of exposure to audiovisual materials through various forms of subtitles (Teng, 2021). Subtitles not only assist comprehension but also resolve the connected speech challenge (Wong et al., 2020), for example. Indeed, it is through subtitles that learners notice new words, and noticing is the first step in vocabulary acquisition as Montero-Perez et al. (2014) argue. To date, most empirical studies on incidental learning through subtitles has been devoted to single word learning, hence leaving formulaic chunks or sequences —i.e., collocations, idioms, phrasal verbs, among other forms (Granger & Paquot, 2008)— underexplored (Puimège & Peters, 2020). We know that audiovisual materials “give adequate exposure to L2 FS [formulaic sequences] for incidental learning” (Puimège & Peters, 2020, p. 528). There is also plenty of evidence to show that many Iranians nowadays access foreign cinematic products through subtitles

(Ameri & Khoshsaligheh, 2023), leaving ample room for incidental language learning or learning outside the classroom (Ameri & Ghodrati, 2019). Furthermore, there is robust evidence to support the role of individual differences in accidental learning. For instance, learners' language competency (e.g., vocabulary size, listening skills or overall English ability) has been argued to be an important factor influencing incidental learning (Suárez & Gesa, 2019; Teng, 2022).

Against this backdrop, this experimental research attempts to examine the incidental learning/acquisition of formulaic chunks and single words through watching one English full-length TV episode in three conditions: with English subtitles (intralingual subtitles), Persian subtitles (interlingual subtitles) and no subtitles. The study also examines how students' overall English competence affects their incidental learning. Following a pre-test/post-test between-subject design with a control group, the study addresses these questions:

1. Is there any significant difference in overall achievement scores of incidental learning of single words and formulaic sequences among English-major students watching interlingually- and intralingually subtitled programs?
2. Does the students' level of English proficiency have any effects on incidental learning of single words and formulaic sequences?

2. Literature review

2.1. History of AVT in FL learning

The nature and extent of using technologies for pedagogical purposes depends on needs of learners, learning goals, and the context accommodated (Kirkwood & Price, 2011). Herbart who was a successor to Kant in Formalism said that elements in learning follow an association relation in which the new elements of knowledge shall be connected to learners' prior knowledge; later on, the concept of formalism was reformed by Europeans and the new term *functional rhythm* was coined that considered three activating stages in learning. These stages were commonly known as reception and processing of input and evaluating the output (Oser & Baeriswyl, 2001).

Not long after, spontaneous teaching, initiating with perception, memory, and cognition rather than reception emerged to build linguistic concepts (Oser & Baeriswyl, 2001). This has been similar to the *dual coding theory*, emphasizing the practicality of using pictures to assist memory in order to accelerate knowledge acquisition. The crucial core of this theory is *Memory* as it plays an integral part in learning (Paivio & Clark, 2006). The results of an experiment showed that accrued use of AV aids can provide learners with a wide perception of language and consequently learning (Fernández Jiménez, 2008).

It is believed in a wide variety of pedagogical theories that better learning could be achieved once the *affective filter* is reduced to the lowest amount possible (Krashen, 1985; Vanderplank, 1990); this is reducing fear and hence maximizing their mental potential by providing a comfortable, error-free learning environment. Correspondingly, a study conducted by Borrás and Lafayette (1994) showed that subtitling can be a great source of help as it develops a sense of self-confidence in learners and

reduces their stress level. It is through subtitles that learners have the chance not to miss any important information concurrent with receiving prompt feedback (Borrás & Lafayette, 1994).

As Vanderplak (1988) said, subtitles can make a great deal of authentic, digestible, and user-friendly language input accessible to viewers. However, several studies have recommended this aid and its pertinent features like pace and length to be used with caution and considering the learners' proficiency level (Kothari et al. 2004).

Palmer and West (1997) said the orthographic information provided with subtitles can facilitate vocabulary learning among learners, both implicitly and explicitly. Herron (1995) suggested that the effects arising from such an instrument only emerge in a long-run exposure. Based on research carried out by Baltova, those who have been exposed to video and audio conditions performed twice as good as those merely hearing the audio (Danan, 2004).

2.2. Incidental vocabulary learning and acquisition

According to Krashen (1982), there are two systems involved in learning a foreign language, commonly referred to as acquisition and learning systems, which respectively deal with the subconscious and conscious processes. In the former, acquirers are unaware of what they are acquiring, and no direct instruction is targeted to learners (Hulstijn, 2001). Incidental or unconscious learning of words occurs when no intention is at work to commit the intended lexical item to memory (Hulstijn, 2013). Teng (2016) believed that incidental vocabulary learning in reading relies on a number of variables, such as students' word level and the context of word usage. To Teng (2016), this vocabulary knowledge is beyond the superficial knowledge of the word, and it covers various aspects of deep vocabulary knowledge including orthography, function, meaning, syntax and form.

Having a concrete knowledge of the rules and structures of another language, whether a second or a foreign one, is an indispensable part of the learning system. Krashen's (1982) hypothesis, the affective filter is similar to what Vygotsky would call *real-life tasks* (Vygotsky & Cole, 1978) and made a point of enhancing a non-threatening learning environment (Nor & Ab Rashid, 2018); Here is where AVT utilization aptly serves the purposes of foreign language acquisition. This incidental learning was asserted by many, including Schmidt (1994), Kweon and Kim (2008), and Yali (2010) to be the best approach for vocabulary retention and recall. According to Lertola, standard subtitles positively affect the retention of lexical information (McLoughlin, 2018). Subtitles can enhance the benefits of multimodal input thanks to the naturalistic setting they provide (Pérez-Serrano et al., 2021).

2.3. Single words and formulaic structures

Under the superordinate of lexical elements, there is a subset named formulaic sequences (FS). Granger and Paquot (2008) introduced five distinguished categories for these formulaic sequences including lexical collocations, idioms, binomials, grammatical collocations, and phrasal verbs. These sequences of words may not be fully predictable and par the course concerning their meaning, function, and features of structure, which creates immense challenges for learners (Wray, 2013). These strings of words used to be the core of language pedagogy as they constitute 20 to 50 percent of the discourse, hence communicating a great deal of meaning. According to Jackendoff (1995), this category is equal

in size or perhaps larger than the single words category. As stated by Schmitt (2008), incidental learning of single words is a slow process occurring in several exposures, whilst the same thing has not been widely probed concerning formulaic sequences (Alali & Schmitt, 2012). FS studies suggested the inefficiency of incidental learning in the case of these longer sequences (Meunier, 2012).

2.4. Memory, recall and recognition

Memory plays a crucial role in language learning and performance. Hintzman (1990), Richardson-Klavehn and Bjork (1988), and some other memory researchers stated that non-declarative memory commonly referred to as implicit or unconscious memory has two major processes and systems known as recall and recognition (Haist et al., 1992). Concerning recall memory, the lengthier the input, the more energy and time required to grasp and master; In recognition memory, however, an increase in the number of impetuses leads to better recognition, which has been noted to be two times more than recalling of information. Human memory tackles two general processes of recall and recognition. In recall, one vividly remembers the general setting, background, or associations of something, but not the focal elements, which are the things that are noticed by viewers upon seeing the image. In recognition, this focal element can be present in the mind, and the plausibility of recalling the general theme or setting in which the element occurred is being investigated. Recognition is linked to partial familiarity with an element. Some had argued that a better recognition influences a better recall, while it is not the case for all (Hollingworth, 1913).

As contended by Danan (2004), subtitles alongside the same language soundtrack can facilitate comprehension (Teng, 2019) and lead to more satisfactory results in vocabulary learning (Peters et al., 2016). As reported by the University of Cambridge, the simultaneous display of spoken and written channels enhances memory recognition thereby improving word recognition (Bird & Williams, 2002).

2.5. Lexis acquisition via subtitles

Deep knowledge of new vocabularies in a foreign language is gained through exposures in various contexts (Horst et al., 1998). Extramural activities such as games and media in that particular foreign language have been suggested to be effective in the learning process (Arnbjörnsdóttir, 2018).

Vocabulary acquired through audiovisual materials can be used both actively in recalling and production, and passively in recognition and comprehension. It is of crucial importance for the material to promote contextualized language learning rather than propelling learners' attention toward mere content and meaning, like what normally occurs in some audiovisual genres, such as a TV weather report, or a documentary (Ruusunen, 2011). Interlingual subtitling has been proven to contribute to learners' comprehension, whereas intralingual subtitling seems to foster lexical acquisition among learners (Bird & Williams, 2002).

In various experimental studies, disparate lexical tests were used to measure the learning of such linguistic elements. These tests along with a brief explanation of the nature of the test and its purpose are presented below:

2.5.1. Form and meaning recognition

Learners were given a set of incomplete sentences along with numerous multiple choices. They were supposed to choose the correct option among distractors constituted of one part replacement in the same part of speech with an almost relatable meaning to the original word. Meaning recognition tests were also used to evaluate learners' recognition of the accurate meaning of the lexicon (Montero-Perez et al., 2014).

2.5.2. Form/meaning recall

In this section, test-takers were provided with a short description or translation of the target element and were asked to complete the incomplete target word written. Translation tasks and questions were also implemented in the meaning recall realm (Puimège & Peters, 2019).

Several studies probed into the beneficial effects of subtitled material on foreign language learning. In an empirical study carried out in 2014, the impact of subtitled or captioned videos was examined on a population of 133 Flemish undergraduates to check any possible changes in learners' vocabulary achievement. These students were split into four groups and exposed to four discrete types of captions, i.e., no caption, keyword captions, full captions, and full captions plus keywords highlighted. The results of this study revealed learners' positive achievement in the realm of word form and word meaning recognition with full and keyword captioning, while word form recall and meaning comprehension remained a challenge (Montero-Perez et al., 2014).

In another study, the researchers investigated the impact of inter/intralingual subtitles. Students were being tested on their acquisition of vocabulary, phrasal verb, and idiomatic expressions of English. A questionnaire of learners' watching habits was distributed, indirectly impacting their incentive and preferences prior to the experiment, consequently enhancing their chance to succeed (Harmer, 2001; Bravo, 2010). The results proved no significant differences, partly due to learners' inability to master their MT yet.

Various forms of subtitles were examined in pedagogical settings in order to scrutinize lexical acquisition, as in recent research in Iran investigating the efficacy of reversed, standard and no subtitle (Mardani & Najmabadi, 2016). However, the study of subtitles tailored based on some academic standards rather than those created by amateur subtitlers disregarding the conventions and standards in place is an under-researched area. The main objective of the current study is to determine the results achieved from different subtitles, as well as the possible correlation between learners' language proficiency levels and their overall performance.

3. Method

3.1. Participants

The sample of this experimental study includes 63 first-year university students (20 males and 43 females), who studied English as a foreign language (either translation or literature) in Iran. They all spoke Persian as their mother language and English as a foreign language. Their age ranged from 18

to 30 years old ($M: 24, SD: 0.15$). They were chosen based on convenience sampling, and they received course credits for their voluntary participation. The participants were divided randomly into three groups: two experimental groups who watched a video with Persian subtitles ($n=23$) and English subtitles ($n=19$), and a control group who watched a video without subtitles ($n=21$). Their English proficiency was also determined according to which 15 participants fell into the beginner level, 30 into the intermediate and 18 into the advanced groups. We followed Dörnyei's (2007) recommendation for the minimum sample size in experimental studies; at least 15 participants per group (p. 99).

3.2. Material

Materials chosen for this study had to meet several requirements. The present work was conducted in an Islamic setting, which demands the use of culturally appropriate materials. Secondly, because the study was conducted online, a full-length film could not be used; therefore, we resorted to sitcoms, where a 20-minute episode can serve the purpose of the study. Thirdly, the same episode from the TV series was used for all groups, which has been common among many studies (e.g., Birulés-Muntané & Soto-Faraco, 2016).

Based on the literature, the audiovisual materials intended to be utilized for educational purposes and in pedagogical settings are required to be selected sensibly in a way that meet the linguistic needs and abilities of the learners (Teng, 2022). Its language ought to be comprehensible and in a standard accent conventionally heard by learners. The authentic material chosen for this research had to be one that was less likely to have been seen by the participants so that the learning impact could be properly measured.

The audiovisual material for this study was the 1993 American sitcom *Frasier* (season 8, episode 4). This episode was about 21 minutes long. Since the series had not been subtitled into Persian, the subtitles were crafted and created by the first researcher using Subtitle Edit (version 3.5.11). The subtitles were based on the *NETFLIX* subtitling standards. The final set of Persian subtitles were checked and proofread by the third researcher, who is a professional subtitler. The subtitles were burnt into this 21-minute-long video file, which was uploaded on an Iranian upload center (www.namasha.com) so that the participants could watch it online at home. The English subtitles were acquired from <https://subscene.com>.

3.3. Instruments

3.3.1. Placement test

A standard, widely accepted test was required to measure the learners' language ability. Due to the online nature of the study, a well-recognized online test was chosen: *EnglishScore: Free British Council English Test*. This test measures the four core language skills, namely grammar, vocabulary, listening and reading (Anton, 2021). This placement test took 40 minutes to complete on average and test takers were given a *CEFR* score ranging from A1 (beginners) to C2 (language masters). Accordingly, 15 participants fell into the beginner (A1-A2) group, 30 into the intermediate (B1-B2) group and 18 into the advanced (C1-C2) group.

3.3.2. Target formulaic sequences and single words

A standard Google form questionnaire was employed. The format and type of questions were inspired by two similar works (Frumuselu et al., 2015; Puimège & Peters, 2019), examining the incidental learning of single word and formulaic structures through exposure to audiovisual material.

To devise the test measuring the participants' learning outcomes, previous studies were reviewed (Frumuselu et al., 2015; Puimège & Peters, 2019). Initially, 41 items were chosen for the test, which included both single words and formulaic sequences from the video. To ensure the validity of the test, the items were piloted three times on a group of students. Subsequently, the questions that received over 25 percent correct answers (six questions) were excluded from the final test. To mitigate carryover effects, the order of items in pre-test and post-test was different. Given the various aspects of learning lexical items (Puimège & Peters, 2019), the vocabulary test was designed to measure learners' learning outputs at the form and meaning levels (on two dimensions of recall and recognition). The reliability of the test was found to be 0.81 using Cronbach's alpha.

The first test measured form recognition through multiple-choice questions:

1. We will have to give her a good ----- when she leaves the office.
a. send-force b. send-away c. send-out d. send-off

The second test measured meaning recognition by multiple-choice questions with options in the participants' mother tongue:

2. He made a nice spin on what I propose.
a. به‌خوبی پیچاندن b. انتقاد مثبت c. به‌درازا کشاندن d. پیشنهاد خوب

In the third part, the recall of form was assessed by supplying the form of a given meaning in both English and Persian. The first letter and the number of letters were given as a hint:

3. Going to a party that you are not invited: c- - - - a p- - - - (10 letters)
4. C - - - - - (7 letters) منفی باف

Lastly, the recall of meaning was measured through translation or description:

5. Stand on ceremony: -----

3.4. Procedures

The data were collected online in two sessions. The participants completed the language competency test and the pre-test three weeks before the viewing sessions. There were three conditions: one group watched the clip with no subtitles, another group watched the clip with Persian subtitles and the last group watched it with English subtitles. Immediately after watching the clip, the link to the online post-test was shared among the participants. The time between the pre-test and post-test was 3 weeks.

Due to the covid-19 pandemic and the imposed lockdowns, participants completed the test at home; they were asked not to check a dictionary or any other resources during the pretest. They were also assured anonymity and confidentiality before the experiment.

4. Results

To answer the research questions, univariate covariance (ANCOVA) and multivariate covariance (MANCOVA) were performed in SPSS. To reduce the instance of a false positive, an analysis of variance (ANOVA) and a Bonferroni post hoc test were employed. The independent and dependent variables of the study can be seen in Table 1. It is worth mentioning that the overall achievement/score is the sum of all the lexical aspects.

Table 1. Research variables

Independent variables	
Inter and intra lingual subtitles	
Learners' proficiency levels	
Dependent variables	
Participants' overall achievement after the treatment	
Participants' meaning scores after the treatment	
Participants' form scores after the treatment	
Participants' recall scores after the treatment	
Participants' recognition scores after the treatment	

Table 2. Descriptive statistics of the control and two treatment groups

		Control Group		Persian Subtitle Group		English subtitle Group	
		Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation
Overall score	Pre-test	0.10	0.10	0.13	0.12	0.10	0.10
	Posttest	0.18	0.15	0.21	0.17	0.21	0.15
Meaning scores	Pre-test	0.12	0.12	0.14	0.16	0.13	0.22
	Posttest	0.21	0.18	0.26	0.20	0.18	0.16
Form scores	Pre-test	0.08	0.10	0.11	0.11	0.07	0.08
	Posttest	0.16	0.15	0.16	0.16	0.20	0.15
Recall scores	Pre-test	0.12	0.12	0.16	0.15	0.11	0.13
	Posttest	0.22	0.19	0.20	0.19	0.30	0.23
Recognition scores	Pre-test	0.10	0.11	0.13	0.12	0.12	0.10
	Posttest	0.19	0.16	0.25	0.15	0.18	0.13

Descriptive statistics in Table 2 suggest that all the control and treatments groups achieved a higher score in terms of overall score, meaning score, form score, recall score and recognition score in the post-test. This means that the audiovisual input has a positive effect on the learning acquisition output (Table 2). We further examined the differences between the groups in terms of their achievement.

The results of an ANOVA (one-way) test between the control and experimental groups showed no significant difference between the control and experimental groups in their overall achievement in the post-test ($\text{sig}=0.846$ & 0.692). In another test, the control group was set aside and the two experiment groups were compared to check the difference between these two. Due to the skewed distribution of data, the Mann-Whitney U test was used, the result of which depicted no significant difference between the two experimental groups ($\text{sig}=-0.076$). Overall, it appeared that the presence of Persian or English subtitles had no effect on the participants' overall achievement in terms of accidental acquisition of lexis.

Table 3. Descriptive indicators of the scores in pre-test and post-test stages in control, English subtitle and Persian subtitle groups sorted by participants' proficiency levels

		Control Group		Persian Subtitle Group		English subtitle Group	
		M	SD	M	SD	M	SD
A Beginner level (A1 & A2)	Pre-test	0.02	0.04	0.13	0.03	0.14	0.18
	Posttest	0.07	0.06	0.15	0.04	0.05	0.04
B Intermediate Level (B1 & B2)	Pre-test	0.08	0.05	0.09	0.09	0.06	0.04
	Posttest	0.17	0.11	0.19	0.14	0.21	0.11
C Advanced level (C1)	Pre-test	0.20	0.12	0.20	0.19	0.15	0.09
	Posttest	0.31	0.19	0.30	0.26	0.31	0.16

The mean score in group A saw an increase in the Persian subtitle group (0.13 to 0.15) and control group (0.02 to 0.07) after the intervention, whereas the same score declined in the English subtitle group (0.14 to 0.05). This can potentially signify source language subtitle's inadequacy in the beginner learners. The overall achievement of intermediate (group B) and advanced (group C) participants improved, regardless of the type of intervention they received (Table 3).

Table 4. Descriptive indicators for beginner learners (group A)

		Control Group		Persian Subtitle Group		English subtitle Group	
		M	SD	M	SD	M	SD
Meaning scores	Pre-test	0.04	0.06	0.12	0.07	0.23	0.37
	Posttest	0.08	0.08	0.16	0.09	0.05	0.04
Form scores	Pre-test	0.01	0.02	0.14	0.12	0.04	0.03
	Posttest	0.06	0.06	0.14	0.07	0.06	0.05
Recall scores	Pre-test	0.02	0.04	0.17	0.10	0.15	0.23
	Posttest	0.09	0.11	0.16	0.08	0.06	0.04
Recognition scores	Pre-test	0.02	0.04	0.11	0.09	0.13	0.11
	Posttest	0.08	0.08	0.18	0.12	0.06	0.07

Here, we examined the variables of the study one by one¹. Participants with a beginner level of English scored higher in their post-test meaning test in the Persian subtitle group (0.12 to 0.16) and no subtitle (control) group (0.04 to 0.08). In contrast, their scores dropped after watching the material with English subtitle (0.23 to 0.05). Form results among these participants demonstrate another increase in the control group (0.01 to 0.06) and English subtitle group (0.04 to 0.06) after the treatment, while it remained unchanged in the experimental group of Persian subtitles (0.14 to 0.14).

A comparison between the recall mean scores in pretest and post-test suggests the inefficiency of subtitles in better recall; However, watching the movie without a subtitle led to better recall.

Similar outcomes can be reported for beginners in the Recognition section, which was a reduction in scores in the intralingual subtitle group (0.13 to 0.06) and a boost in interlingual (0.11 to 0.18) and control groups (0.02 to 0.08). Overall, English subtitles seemed to be the least effective for beginners.

Intermediate and advanced learners' mean scores in all levels of meaning, form, recall, and recognition improved in all three study groups in the post-test. The results of a Bonferroni test for comparing pairwise-disjoint groups point out a difference between the Persian and English subtitle groups.

A multivariate analysis of covariance (MANCOVA) test was conducted to examine the differences between beginner level learners' scores in the two sections of Meaning and Form among all three groups. A test statistic in multivariate analysis known as *Roy's Largest Root* was run, where increasing values are related to the effects contributing more to the model. Based on the results of *Roy's Largest Root*, the concurrent effect (multivariate) of subtitle on participants' scores in the two discrete sections of Form and Meaning was approved ($p < 0.05$).

A one-way ANCOVA was conducted to compare the effectiveness of the subtitled material while considering a control group receiving no subtitles. Levene's test and normality checks were carried out and the assumptions were met. There was a significant difference in the mean meaning score [$F = 6.05$ & $p = 0.01$]. Again, a Bonferroni test was used to determine the disparity and difference between groups.

According to Table 5, the results show a great disparity between learners' scores in meaning between the two groups of English and Persian subtitles, with learners in the latter group achieving higher scores. The difference in the values of statistical significance illustrates a disparity between the control and Persian subtitle groups, which is very close to the difference threshold.

Based on the results of the multivariate test statistic ($p = 0.081$ & $F = 3.273$), concerning post-test recall and recognition scores, the concurrent effect (multivariate) of subtitle on participants' scores in the two discrete sections of *Recognition* and *Recall* was not approved ($p > 0.05$).

According to the results of the between-group Covariance analysis of post-test scores in the variables of *Recognition* and *Recall*, no significant changes were found in beginner learners' scores after the intervention. The results of an ANOVA test and the p-value (0.74) suggested no significant difference

¹. Meaning Score

between intermediate participants' mean scores among the three groups of Control, Persian and English subtitles.

Table 5. Bonferroni test for comparing pairwise-disjoint groups of control, Persian and English subtitle

			Mean difference	Standard Error	Statistical significance (p-value)
Meaning	English Subtitle	Persian Subtitle	-0.17	0.05	0.02
		Control group	-0.03	0.05	0.99
	Persian Subtitle	English subtitle	0.17	0.05	0.02
		Control group	0.14	0.05	0.06
	Control group	English subtitle	0.03	0.05	0.99
		Persian Subtitle	-0.14	0.05	0.06

Based on the results of *Roy's Largest Root test* ($p=0.003$ & $F=7.484$), the concurrent effect (multivariate) of subtitle on intermediate participants' scores in the two discrete sections of *Form* and *Meaning* was approved ($p<0.05$). The participants' scores in form pertinent questions significantly changed in this group.

A Bonferroni test was used to determine the disparity and difference between groups.

Table 6. Bonferroni test for comparing pairwise-disjoint groups of control, Persian and English subtitle

			Mean difference	Standard Error	Statistical significance (p-value)
Form	English Subtitle	Persian Subtitle	0.13	0.04	0.01
		Control group	0.08	0.04	0.26
	Persian Subtitle	English subtitle	-0.13	0.04	0.01
		Control group	-0.05	0.04	0.60
	Control group	English subtitle	-0.08	0.04	0.26
		Persian Subtitle	0.05	0.04	0.60

The results revealed a great disparity between learners' scores in form between the two groups of English and Persian subtitle. Those who had watched the English subtitled version of the series scored higher than those receiving the Persian subtitle. This speaks to the significant effect of English subtitle on communicating the form of the lexical structures to learners with an intermediary knowledge of English.

Based on the results of the multivariate test statistic ($p=0.000$ & $F=11.604$), the concurrent effect (multivariate) of subtitle on intermediate participants' scores in the two discrete sections of *Recognition* and *Recall* was approved ($p<0.05$). Participants' score in group B (intermediate learners) had not significantly altered in *Recognition* questions. The results of an ANOVA test and the p-value (0.97) revealed no significant difference between advanced participants' mean scores among the three groups of Control, Persian and English subtitles (0.00).

Based on the results of a MANCOVA test for advanced learners ($p=0.569$ & $F=0.590$), the concurrent effect (multivariate) of subtitle on participants' scores in the two discrete sections of Form and Meaning was not approved ($p>0.05$).

According to the results of between-group Covariance analysis of post-test scores in the variables of *Meaning* and *Form*, the participants' scores in *Form* ($p=0.58$) and *Meaning* (0.80) pertinent questions had not significantly changed in this group.

Based on a multivariate covariance analysis of advanced learners' recall and recognition scores in the post-test ($p=0.462$ & $F=0.126$), the concurrent effect (multivariate) of subtitle on participants' scores in the two discrete sections of *Recognition* and *Recall* was not approved ($p>0.05$). Concerning the Covariance analysis between *Recall* and *Recognition*, no significant changes can be deduced in advanced learners' scores after the intervention.

Overall, although the intermediate and advanced students demonstrated an upward trend in all their scores, beginners did not follow the same trend at all levels. Among beginners who watched the video with English subtitle, almost all categories were negatively impacted, except the form of those targeted lexical elements which showed an improvement compared to pre-test scores. In the same group of participants, the Persian subtitled video proved to exert no effects on form scores, while a reducing impact was reported in the recall ability of students after receiving the aforementioned AVT mode.

The results of this study can be summarized as follows:

Table 7. Overall results

	Beginner			Intermediate			advanced		
	Control	Persian	English	Control	Persian	English	Control	Persian	English
Overall	↑↑	↑↑	↓↓	↑↑	↑↑	↑↑	↑↑	↑↑	↑↑
Meaning	↑↑	↑↑	↓↓	↑↑	↑↑	↑↑	↑↑	↑↑	↑↑
Form	↑↑	Unchanged	↓↓	↑↑	↑↑	↑↑	↑↑	↑↑	↑↑
Recall	↑↑	↓↓	↓↓	↑↑	↑↑	↑↑	↑↑	↑↑	↑↑
Recognition	↑↑	↑↑	↓↓	↑↑	↑↑	↑↑	↑↑	↑↑	↑↑

5. Discussion

The findings of the present article offer important insights into the extent to which incidental learning of single words and formulaic sequences can be achieved through watching subtitled TV series and how students' proficiency level affects such learning. ANCOVA and MANCOVA results suggested that watching a video with subtitles or without subtitles significantly affects students' incidental learning of formulaic sequences.

Despite studies that would consider the efficacy of subtitles tightly tied to its exposure length, with no evident developments in short exposures (d'Ydewalle & Pavakanun, 1997; van de Poel and d'Ydewalle, 1999; Ghia, 2007, 2011, 2012), this experiment suggested the benefits of subtitles in short-term. Moreover, the related literature introduced the 'frequency of occurrence' as a key factor for vocabulary learning and remembering (Ellis, 2003; Sabouri et al., 2015). This experiment, however, demonstrated that even in the case of words that show up once, learning does take place. On the other hand, the bulk of research provided evidence for the effectiveness of subtitles, while only a few, including Reese (1984) proposed the hindering impact of this mode of translation on learners due to the cognitive load it may bring (Naghizadeh & Darabi, 2015). This could have been true about beginners receiving intralingual subtitled material. Supporting the view of those asserting the existence of a relationship between a language's prior knowledge and later achievements in the same language, learning lexis through subtitles occurs with a higher success rate among those who already possess a relatively adequate knowledge of the language.

The results of this study suggest that interlingual subtitles are most appropriate for beginners while for the Intermediate learners the most had been attained in the meaning and recognition via Persian subtitle, and more form and recall in the English version. Advanced participants performed significantly better following the intralingual subtitles, except in form subsection which benefitted equally from both subtitles. In a similar study carried out in 2015, reversed subtitles proved to be the most influential in incidental vocabulary acquisition (Gorjian, 2015); the same results were obtained in another study (Holobow et al., 1984). According to the results, although MT proved to be effective in learning new words, the outcome for each mode of subtitle was different from the findings of previous studies. According to another study, bimodal subtitle stands the first, followed by the standard mode, and lastly, the reversed one concerning their effectiveness in vocabulary Recognition and Recall areas, and this seems to differ from the outcomes of the current study (Zareei, 2009).

Accordingly, form recall was significantly influenced by the subtitles even though Bitchener and Nation (2001) considered these questions to be far more demanding than meaning recall and recognition and no conclusion had been drawn in that project concerning the impact of AVT on meaning recall (Puimège & Peters, 2019). In this experiment, Form and Recall were the two most impacted areas of language, particularly in the English subtitled and control groups. Learners can benefit from subtitling regardless of their proficiency level (Frumuselu et al., 2015). Concerning the disparity between learners' achievements among the three linguistic differentiated groups, a Bonferroni test exhibited an immense gap between beginner and advanced participants regarding their recognition ability, where advanced learners scored significantly higher than beginners. Similar results were found for students' recalling ability with a stepped approach; accordingly, advanced participants outperformed intermediate ones, who themselves achieved higher than the beginners. Duplicate results were achieved concerning Meaning questions.

Overall, interlingual subtitles seem to be most appropriate for beginners, while the same issue varied for intermediate ones, proving more achievements in the Meaning and Recognition via Persian subtitle, and more Form and Recall in the English version. Advanced participants were significantly better with the intralingual version rather than the standard one, except in the Form subsection, which benefitted equally from both subtitles.

6. Conclusion

The overall goal of this paper was to scrutinize incidental learning/acquisition of single words and formulaic chunks through watching a full-length English-language TV episode with or without subtitles. To examine incidental vocabulary learning outcomes, an experiment with a select group of Iranian major-English university students was carried out. In addition, learners' English proficiency levels were taken into account for the analysis. The overall findings evinced the potential of audiovisual input with subtitles in incidental learning/acquisition of formulaic chunks to varying degrees. Therefore, subtitled videos are suggested for enhancing and encouraging incidental vocabulary learning either in the classroom settings or at home as an independent language activity. As Teng (2022) argues, they can also “offer psychologically motivational stimuli, including motivation, visual support, and recycling of lower-frequency words” (p. 10).

Since this research was launched in 2021, the researchers faced restrictions imposed by the Covid-19 outbreak, including limited accessibility to participants. Only 63 Iranian EFL undergraduates volunteered to partake in the experiment. Future studies can rely on a larger sample size to draw generalizable conclusions. Future research may also address further facets including learners' reception, comprehension, reactions, and learning strategies when watching fast-paced films and TV series with a more complex plot. Additionally, longitudinal studies are required to examine the long-lasting effects of this sort of short exposure on memory and production. Lastly, other learner-related factors, such as learners' aptitude or their interest in subtitles or viewing habits can be examined to see how they affect incidental learning of formulaic sequences. To better understand if language gains are retained, future investigations should tap into the learning process; in other words, “how learners respond to incidental gains in vocabulary knowledge” (Webb, 2020, p. 232); for example, if they jot down new collocations and idioms or if they review their notes later.

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the authors.

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Louis Vuitton's Strategies for Enhancing Customers' Engagement on Instagram and Weibo

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Abstract

Social media platforms, especially Instagram and X (former Twitter), play an indispensable role in disseminating information all over the world. This research article aims to figure out the strategies adopted by Louis Vuitton on Instagram and Weibo to improve its brand publicity and brand awareness among its customers. Content analysis is utilized to give a comprehensive picture and objective implications. The contents posted from 1-30 May 2023, are chosen to gather first-hand information. Four types of publics and three social-mediated publics are illustrated to facilitate the reader's understanding of social network analysis. Furthermore, the findings revealed different approaches adopted by Instagram and Weibo to cater to local traditions and cultures to make more profits and occupy a larger market share. Collectivism and individualism are favored by Weibo and Instagram, respectively, which is in line with Eastern and Western preferences.

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1. Introduction

Social media are playing an essential role in daily life for both individuals and organizations, as they can provide a precious opportunity to share their information and interact with each other to achieve their purposes. There are several theories to analyze social media, one of the most popular of which is 'social penetration theory'. Altman and Taylor (1973) coined the term to indicate the process from being distant to being intimate via the online social network. According to this theory, developing a relationship is gradual, systematic, and predictable (Sheldon, 2015). Altman and Taylor (1973) utilized the example of the onion to illustrate this theory. At the very beginning of forming a relationship, only extremely superficial information, such as music, food, and weather, would be shared. When the two parties are getting familiar with each other, more important information, such as sexual preference and age would be talked about. The innermost information would only be known by only a few people and entails strong personal feelings, opinions, and political stances (Altman & Taylor, 1973).

The penetration can be achieved through two dimensions: breadth and depth. Breadth indicates the number of topics discussed, while depth implies how deep and meaningful a topic can be (Sheldon, 2015, p. 7). Jin (2013) conducted an analysis focused on private disclosure on social media (X, former Twitter). The results revealed five dimensions of self-disclosure: (1) daily life, (2) social identity and activity, (3) competence, (4) social status, and (5) health. The present study analyzes the strategies and approaches of the luxury brand Louis Vuitton to improve customers' connectedness and loyalty. Content analysis is utilized to reach a solid and comprehensive conclusion. The five dimensions are also incorporated in terms of the content analyzed.

Other research focused on utilizing content analysis to explore and analyze a specific social phenomenon, such as the analysis of Islamic extremist propaganda on Instagram (Clever et al., 2023). Previous similar studies mainly focus on Facebook (e.g., Lin et al., 2017), ignoring other social media sites, such as X (former Twitter) and Instagram. This study is significant because findings from Facebook cannot be generalized to other social media sites (Bonsón & Bednárová, 2013). Two research questions were outlined in this study:

1. How does Louis Vuitton propagate its products on Instagram and Weibo, respectively?
2. What does Louis Vuitton resort to regarding collectivism and individualism on Instagram and Weibo?

2. Review of literature

2.1. Social media

Social media can and do play a prominent role in people's everyday lives, and they also facilitate the propagation of the values and identities of corporations and brands worldwide due to their inherent flexibility and convenience. Meikle (2016) utilizes social media to describe various emerging internet phenomena, including blogs, platforms for user-generated content, and other applications. Nevertheless, not all things appearing on the internet are instances of social media; for instance, Wikipedia is an online website where everyone can access an account to edit content. However, it is

not labeled as social media because there are no connections between different editors. In light of this, Meikle (2016, p. 6) defines social media as “networked database platforms that combine public with personal communication”.

Most luxury brands use social media to advertise their products and increase brand awareness since such platforms could provide channels for the rapid dissemination of information. The world’s top 100 luxury companies have amassed a total of \$247 billion in 2019, demonstrating a 10.8% annual growth (Deloitte, 2019). Moreover, most luxury brands utilize social media to engage with their potential customers to conduct business activities, such as announcing new products and occupying market share (Choi et al., 2020). Despite the connected nature of social media, customer communication is anything but straightforward (Wang et al., 2020). Robson and Banerjee (2023) develop four dimensions that would influence on the post’s popularity on social media, which are presentation, engagement, brand awareness, and temporal characteristics, respectively.

Presentation characteristics refer to the ways in which the contents of the posts are presented and delivered (Robson & Banerjee, 2023). Druckman (2001) develops the theory of framing to guide the principles of presentation. In this theory, framing means an effect that happens when a communicator purposefully delivers a message with strategies that attract potential audiences’ attention. For instance, Instagram and Weibo might deliver messages in a vivid and colorful approach, attracting as many customers as possible, to increase the brand’s publicity and popularity.

Engagement characteristics refer to the strategies and properties that enable brands to have interactions with customers (Robson & Banerjee, 2023). Attachment theory, developed by Hinson et al. (2019), is utilized to increase brands’ popularity. This theory believes that to engage with a brand, customers need to feel a sense of attachment to the brand (Wallendorf & Arnould, 1988). Hinson et al. (2019) find that Facebook users’ attachment to a certain brand makes them to be engaged with Facebook page. Therefore, inspired by the attachment theory, the interactions between brands and their followers, which are facilitated via posts, should increase the brand’s popularity to some extent (Hinson et al., 2019).

Brand awareness characteristics refer to certain properties of posts that can increase brands’ publicity and online presence (Robson & Banerjee, 2023). Aaker (2004) considers branding strategy as the principle explaining the impact of brand awareness on brand popularity. Each brand has its unique characters and advantages, helping it to develop a brand equity, and further to establish a well-known and widely recognized brand among users (Robson & Banerjee, 2023). An indispensable component of brand equity is achieved through brand awareness (Robson & Banerjee, 2023), which increases the visibility and familiarity of the brands among the end users (Aaker, 2004). When a brand promotes itself and posts something through social media, this can contribute to brand awareness, which increases the possibility for the posts to be popular (Swani & Milne, 2017).

Temporal characteristics contain properties related to timely posts (Robson & Banerjee, 2023), which is guided by social impact theory. This theory suggests that impacts depend on immediacy (Latané, 1981). Immediacy refers to the proximity in time between senders and receivers (Robson & Banerjee, 2023), in this context, the brands’ posts and followers. If a brand has its active online activities, such as sending posts, then it has opportunity to utilize the posts to attract its followers’ attention due to the

fact that followers have only a device away from a brand (Robson & Banerjee, 2023), and hence the immediate interactions between brand and followers might increase a brand's popularity.

All in all, brands could utilize social media as a useful tool to propagate their products and enhance customers' engagement and brands' popularity. This research article intends to analyze Louis Vuitton's strategies utilized by Instagram and Weibo, respectively. Weibo is commonly utilized in China, the second largest luxury market, while X (former Twitter) is readily available in Western countries and Japan (Wang et al., 2020). The strategies to demonstrate their products on these social media vary depending on high- and low-context cultures. Brands should post more text-based information in low-context cultures, while image-based formats are more preferred in high-context cultures (Wang et al., 2020).

2.2. High- and low-context theory

Hall (1989) observes that meaning and context are inter-influenced and intertwined. Different contexts have various interpretations of meaning. "A high-context (HC) communication or message is one in which most of the information is either in the physical context or internalized in the person, while very little is in the coded, explicit, transmitted part of the message" (Hall, 1989, p. 91). High-context (HC) cultures are more likely to be picture-oriented (Hall, 1989). By contrast, he also mentions that low-context (LC) communication relies heavily on explicit codes. Generally speaking, Western societies are deemed low-context, whereas Asian communities are usually reckoned as high-context (De Mooij, 2021; Liao et al., 2008). As a result, luxury brands on Weibo, which represents the HC society in China, adopt more picture-based and multimodal strategies. Instagram, which incorporates more cultures and dimensions, is more text oriented. Previous studies have demonstrated that cross-border organizations usually illustrate more vivid pictures, emotions, and metaphors in HC cultures like China while producing primarily text-based products in LC cultures (An, 2007; Okazaki & Alonso, 2003). This phenomenon also applies to social media (Wang et al., 2020). Weibo, a representative social media in China, often encompasses many celebrities' pictures, emojis, metaphors, and other irrelevant information that have nothing related to what it wants to propagate (Tsai & Men, 2017).

2.3. Collectivism and individualism

In addition to the different propaganda strategies adopted by Instagram and Weibo, there are other differences between the two social media, including the cultural dimensions. A culture's system will more or less influence an individual's perception of the world and subsequent behaviors (Hofstede, 1985). Based on Hofstede's theory (2011), there are six dimensions of national cultures: power distance, uncertainty avoidance, individualism versus collectivism, masculinity versus femininity, long-term versus short-term orientation, and indulgence versus restraint. The big difference between the two social media is that Weibo is located in China, where collectivism is prevalent, while Instagram is utilized chiefly by Western countries, where individualism is preferred (Hofstede, 2011).

Hofstede (1985) defines individualism as a "loosely knit social framework in society" in which people typically do not have a close relationship with each other (p. 348). They are self-centered. By contrast, collectivism is a "tightly knit social framework" (Hofstede, 1985, p. 348). People in a collectivist

society are more likely to help others and form friendly relationships with each other. Some scholars have conducted relevant research on traditional advertising about the two choices: individualism or collectivism (Cheng & Schweitzer, 1996; Lin, 2001; Morling & Lamoreaux, 2008).

Just like the high- and low-context theory (Hall, 1989), Wang et al. (2020) found that Asian countries prefer collectivism, whereas Western countries tend to be more individualistic. To answer the second research question, the intentions of customers' purchasing behaviors need to be considered and analyzed. Those in collective societies are more likely to be connected with shared values and social norms such as patriotism (Etzioni, 1968). As a result, these consumers in collective societies might have a way to make their personalities blurred or ignored (Turner et al., 1987). In other words, customers in a collective society tend to have more self-monitoring and self-presentation to show their personalities and social standings (Bian & Forsythe, 2012). By comparison, people from individualist societies emphasize self-consciousness and emotional independence (Hofstede, 1984).

Knowing the difference and points of emphasis might be helpful for cross-border companies to propagate their products and services purposefully. In addition, Instagram, representing the individualistic society (Silva et al., 2023), might need to deliver posts in a text-based and personality-oriented approach. In contrast, Weibo's content might be more multimodal and collective to meet Asia's HC cultures and collectivism. Social media play an essential role in disseminating different forms of cultures and values. Hence, various strategies are adopted to propagate international organizations' products and improve their brand awareness. In this way, their business values can be maximized with the help of social media.

2.4. Content analysis

Content analysis is defined as "a research technique for making replicable and valid inferences from texts (or other meaningful matter) to the contexts of their use" (Krippendorff, 2019, p. 2). Shen and Bissell (2013) conducted a research about how beauty brands adopt Facebook to increase brand awareness, occupy a larger market share, and strengthen brand loyalty by focusing on six brands: Estee Lauder, MAC cosmetics, Clinique, L'Oreal, Maybelline, and CoverGirl. They sought to check what kinds of social media tools are utilized by these brands to connect with their users. Moreover, service-centered research regarding brand value (e.g., Tynan et al., 2010) reveals a shift from a product-centered viewpoint to a view that treasures personalized experiences. With the help of social media networks, customers can choose the content they want to receive based on their preferences (Shen & Bissell, 2013).

The most recent scholarly development in the field of social media content analysis is the combination of several approaches to examine a recently discovered, little-studied phenomenon. For instance, Ma and Zhang (2022) conducted a social network analysis (SNA) and content analysis about the #MeToo Movement in China. On 1 January 2018, a female PhD student posted on Weibo, claiming that she was sexually assaulted by her then-supervisor. On the same day, Weibo reported that an investigation was on the way to check the authenticity of this claim. With this announcement, several similar cases were reported all over the world, triggering a heated discussion about sexual harassment and gender inequalities, which was labeled as the #MeToo Movement in China.

The public delivered their viewpoints on Weibo about this topic. The idea of the public is debated and envisioned as a collective person with a common interest (Ma & Zhang, 2022). Dewey (1927) defined the public as a collection of individuals who face the same problem, identify it, and organize to address it. Grunig (1997) described a public as a homogenous social collectivity that recognizes the same issue and works collectively to solve it. According to Grunig (1997), four types of publics were categorized: (1) all-issue publics, who are concerned about all topics and issues, (2) single-issue publics, who are only concerned with issues that are related to themselves, (3) hot-issue publics, who are extremely active in heated issues and topics, regardless of relevance to their interests, (4) apathetic publics, who show no interest in any topic or issue. Ma and Zhang (2022) utilized four dimensions of public, along with SNA and content analysis to identify different social-mediated public positions and stances in the #MeToo Movement. They identified three social-mediated publics in the #MeToo Movement on Weibo: (1) the provoking public, which is paramount in starting a discussion, (2) the bridging public, who is responsible for disseminating the information to various groups to publicize a certain topic, (3) the powerful public, who is the combination of the previous two publics and is the most powerful one.

What is more, hashtags facilitate the formation of different communities and ad hoc societies (Bruns & Burgess, 2015). Islamic extremists and other online movements, both democratic and autocratic, can unite and label their digital audiences (Awan, 2017) to achieve their purposes and ambitions. Hashtags can also bring together those with similar interests and enthusiasm to form a solid online community to promote their agendas and activities. At the time of data collection, consumers' initial impression of an Instagram post was its images. The so-called "picture superiority effect" (Paivio & Csapo, 1973) states that images typically leave deeper imprints on people's minds than texts and that the valence of these images influences later involvement (Geise et al., 2021).

The content analysis is utilized comprehensively in this research article because of its wide usage and broad application. What is different is that this research intends to analyze Instagram and Weibo, two social media that are under researched compared to Facebook; hence, a new and inspiring insight might be formed to enrich the scholar of content analysis.

3. Method

This part intends to collect first-hand information posted by Louis Vuitton's official accounts on Instagram and Weibo. The data collection and data analysis are expected to provide insights on the strategies adopted by Louis Vuitton to propagate its products on Instagram and Weibo. Furthermore, by conducting a content analysis, we try to shed light on how collectivism and individualism are utilized on Instagram and Weibo, respectively.

3.1. Data collection

The data were collected from Louis Vuitton's official Instagram and Weibo accounts from May 1st, 2023, to May 30th, 2023, and a content analysis was conducted to analyze how these two social media can help manufacturers propagate their products and improve their relationship with clients. All kinds of data, including images, art, sounds, and the number of 'likes' and 'comments' were gathered to arrive at a comprehensive conclusion regarding the time, strategies, and adopted approaches.

3.2. Data analysis

The basic information to analyze entails the post time and the number of ‘likes’, ‘comments’, and ‘shares’ (Shen & Bissell, 2013). Three kinds of time slots are defined: if a post is sent between 9 am to 5 pm on weekdays, it is deemed as the office hour post; if it is sent outside the 9 am to 5 pm period, it is labeled as non-office hour post; and if it is sent on Saturday and Sunday, it is considered a weekend post (Shen & Bissell, 2013).

4. Results

4.1. Weibo’s posting strategy

The first research question aims to delve into the strategies adopted by Louis Vuitton to propagate its products. When it comes to the number of posts, Louis Vuitton adopted a slightly different strategy on Instagram and Weibo. It delivered 106 posts on Instagram between May 1st and May 30th, while the number of posts on Weibo during the same period is only 42. It is understandable because Instagram is utilized by most Westerners and Weibo’s users are mainly Chinese and other Easterners, and Louis Vuitton's headquarters are located in a Western country: France (Silva et al., 2023). In addition to the number of posts, there is also a variance of post time. Among the 42 posts on Weibo, only 7 were posted during the weekend, and the remaining posts were all delivered during the weekday. Among the 35 weekday posts, 18 posts were delivered during office hours, whereas 17 posts were posted during non-office hours, accounting for 51.5% and 48.5% of all the weekday posts, respectively. The following chart demonstrates the date, time, ‘likes’, ‘comments’, and ‘sharing’ from 1st May to 30th May on Weibo.

Table 1. Three Dimensions (Likes, Sharing, and Comments) on Louis Vuitton's Official Weibo Account (1)

Table 1				
Date	Time	Likes	Sharing	Comments
5.29	22.00	62	8	27
5.29	18.30	193	126	135
5.29	17.30	115	118	3
5.29	16.30	280	134	43
5.29	15.30	3.1w	9686	4618
5.29	14.30	139	118	12
5.28	22.00	13.6w	975	15.1w
5.28	15.44	18.1w	20.4w	3088
5.27	11.00	209	117	43
5.26	20.00	164	116	12
5.26	19.00	148	117	15
5.26	17.00	1.2w	5355	1w
5.26	15.47	24.5w	30.9w	2.3w
5.25	19.30	203	124	48
5.25	08.00	3.1w	25.5w	603
5.25	00.10	1523	100	210
5.24	19.30	1499	56	190
5.22	19.30	1440	148	408
5.18	15.00	187	130	67
5.18	10.01	2972	3048	810
5.17	10.00	13w	4.3w	2.4w
5.16	15.00	13.9w	6.5w	3.4w

Table 2. Three Dimensions (Likes, Sharing and Comments) on Louis Vuitton's Official Weibo Account (2)

Table2				
Date	Time	Likes	Sharing	Comments
5.16	10.00	14.8w	5.8w	2.5w
5.15	21.30	201	119	35
5.15	19.00	196	116	23
5.13	17.00	252	131	71
5.13	14.01	252	131	51
5.11	11.00	443	123	49
5.10	16.30	428	123	33
5.10	14.00	440	124	20
5.10	12.30	417	115	18
5.08	15.40	4.5w	1.6w	1w
5.07	15.00	338	121	49
5.07	12.00	291	122	41
5.05	22.11	174	119	31
5.05	21.30	152	114	12
5.05	21.00	164	119	9
5.05	10.30	21.2w	1.7w	3180
5.02	20.00	14.9w	21.7w	2.4w
5.02	14.00	238	120	39
5.01	18.00	8.2w	9w	1.1w
5.01	17.00	15.4w	27.2w	3.6w

The content posted at 03:47 pm on May 26th (table 1) attracted the most likes, shares, and posts sent at 10 pm on May 28th received the most comments. It can be concluded that customers during office hours on weekdays are not willing to spend time commenting, and they prefer to 'like' and 'share' if they are interested in the content. However, most comments appear during non-office hours on the weekends, when customers are likely to have more free time. The content posted at 03:47 pm on May 26th is related to Victoria Song, a well-known Chinese singer, actress, and model. She is also the lead singer of the South Korean girl group f(x). The detailed content is:

A brilliant atmosphere bloomed in every gesture. Brand spokesperson @ Victoria Song appeared at the scene of the 2024# Louis Vuitton Early Spring Show # to watch the gorgeous ideas of Nicolas Ghesquière, the artistic director of women's wear. Review the whole show, and then explore the fashion inspiration. [*The translation is mine*]

Following the text, a good-looking picture of Victoria Song is attached, which attracts the most likes and comments. On the one hand, the content is extremely normal in Louis Vuitton's official Weibo account to propagate its newest products and fashion. On the other hand, audiences and customers during office hours might get tired after a long period of concentration and focus; hence, they might want to welcome any distraction. When it comes to the most comments posted at 10 pm on May 28th, it still relates to Victoria Song, along with other famous people:

2024# Louis Vuitton Early Spring Show # presents Nicolas Ghesquière, the artistic director of women's wear, with fantastic fashion ideas on Bella Island on Lake Maggiore in Italy. Brand Spokesperson @ Victoria Song, Brand Spokesperson Gu Ailing @ Frog Princess Ailing, Singer Felix, Actor Urassaya Sperbund, Singer Jaden Smith, Brand Spokesperson Emma Stone, Model Kōki, Brand Spokesperson Alicia Vikander, Singer Lous & The Yakuza, Brand spokesperson Jennifer Connelly, actor Paul Bettany, actor Thuso Mbedu, fashion blogger Chiara Ferragni, and many star friends all shared their impressions and experiences. You are invited to look back at the big show website link and return to the fashion dream. [*The translation is mine*]

After the content, a short video lasting approximately two minutes demonstrates the beautiful view of the Italian island and all kinds of famous people, including Victoria Song. When conducting a sentiment analysis in the comments, it is found that most comments are emotionally positive. For instance, Victoria Song is beautiful, Felix is handsome, and so forth.

4.2. Instagram's posting strategy

It was impossible to find the exact time of the posting of Louis Vuitton on Instagram, but the number of likes and comments could be spotted. The post sent out on May 2nd (Table 2) received the most likes (837.000 likes). The content is a short dancing video led by the girls' group LE SSERAFIM, whose members come from South Korea and Japan. The caption is:

Women's Pre-Fall Show 2023. K-pop group #LE_SSERAFIM performed at the #LouisVuitton after-party in Seoul. Watch the full show via the link in the bio.

The likes outnumber that on Weibo, for Instagram has a wider scope of customers and followers for Louis Vuitton. What is similar to Weibo is that both social media can receive the most likes when the model and the celebrity are included in the post. Regarding the most comments, May 3rd received the most (8.599 comments); the caption of the post is as follows:

Women's Pre-Fall Show 2023. Celebrities #Felix, #Hwasa, #GongJun, and House ambassador #Taeyeon attended #LouisVuitton's first Pre-Fall show by @NicolasGhesquiere on the Jamsugyo Bridge in Seoul. Watch the full show via the link in the bio.

Likewise, several celebrities appear in this post, including Felix and Hwasa. What is different from Weibo is that the post is delivered on weekdays. Based on these categorizations, it is found that each brand has its unique pattern of the time to post (Shen & Bissell, 2013). When considering the different types of brands, it is detected that 88.6% of high-end brands like Estee Lauder, MAC Cosmetics, Clinique, and department store brands like L'Oreal, Maybelline, and CoverGirl post Facebook during office hours, 8% are delivered on weekends, and only 3.5% are posted during non-office hours (Shen & Bissell, 2013). For the department store brands, 66.8% of the posts are delivered during office hours, 19% during non-office hours, and 14.2% on the weekends (Shen & Bissell, 2013).

Similarly, 16.67% of the contents on Weibo are delivered on the weekends, while the remaining are all posted on weekdays. It can be assumed that brands and customers all have their own things to do during weekends; hence, the weekends' activity on the Weibo is less frequent than that during the weekdays. By contrast, activities on Instagram are more frequent on weekends.

5. Discussion and conclusion

One possible prospect of content analysis is that it can combine other disciplines, such as politics and religion to have a case study about certain groups, as illustrated before (see Clever et al., 2023). The contents delivered by Instagram primarily focused on brand promotion and improving brand awareness, which are consistent with the ideology of individualism (Hofstede, 2011). By contrast, Weibo is a Chinese product where collectivism is prevalent (Hofstede, 2011) and other common feelings and emotions are mentioned instead of only promoting the brand's publicity and awareness. Louis Vuitton, with the help of Weibo, calls for the attention of the traditional homeland and environmental protection, which is in line with the ideology of collectivism in Chinese society.

Social media plays a vital role in propagating a brand's name and its products. However, the strategy to be utilized needs careful consideration, for it not only concerns the success of improving brand awareness and brand reputation, but it also needs to cater to localized customers and audiences. This research article analyzes the different strategies adopted by Louis Vuitton on Instagram and Weibo, respectively, and cultural differences should be considered. As mentioned previously, Instagram is video-based, while Weibo is photo-oriented, so these two strategies are appropriate for the different lifestyles and cultures between Western customers and Eastern customers.

Content analysis may be used to perform quantitative research in an effective and efficient manner, albeit some limits are inescapable. First and foremost, this study only includes Instagram, which represents Western social media, and Weibo, which represents Chinese social media. Other social

media platforms, such as X (former Twitter) with 320 million active monthly users, can also give valuable insights and tactics. Furthermore, the data is gathered and evaluated during the International Labor Day vacation season. The vacation season may alter the sorts of posts and the frequency with which they are made (Pinto & Yagnik, 2017). Other types of postings may grow because of gift exchange and holiday greetings (Pinto & Yagnik, 2017). Additionally, dataset bias cannot be avoided because dataset bias is well-known (Shenkman et al., 2021). Datasets are a mirror that can reflect societal inequities (Condliffe, 2019). For example, white individuals outnumber other ethnicities in X (former Twitter) AI-generated teaser photographs (Lyons, 2020). Future research should avoid data bias as much as possible. Moreover, various data should be collected in multiple social media to reach a more comprehensive and systematical conclusion.

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Rendition of Planting and Payoff in Localized Films: A Case Study

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Abstract

Planting and payoff or foreshadowing is a narrative technique in screen writing where a future event is foreshadowed by clues and hints. These clues may seem meaningless at first, however, their importance is revealed as the story unfolds in the payoff scene. This study aimed to investigate the rendition of planting and payoff in the Persian amateur subtitling and official dubbing of ten Anglophone narrative movies. Multimodal transcription and Chaume's signifying codes were used to describe scenes containing plantings and their corresponding payoffs. Then, translation strategies adopted by the translators of each mode were identified. Finally, concluding remarks on the success of each mode in rendering foreshadowing were suggested. Findings demonstrated the dubbed and subtitled versions were equally successful in rendering the planting and payoffs. However, the reasons for the failure in each mode were different. Finally, it was suggested that careful attention to signifying codes, and particularly based on the results of this study to iconographic and graphic codes, should be paid while rendering planting and payoff.

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1. Introduction

Being multimodal in nature, Audiovisual (AV) products require their own translational strategies to transfer the various aspects of original in target language (Taylor, 2016). Like other types of translation, Audiovisual Translation (AVT) has to overcome obstacles caused by language differences and cultural barriers (Karamitroglou, 2000). However, AVT, translation of narrative movies of different genres, can become a laborious task when the comprehension and appreciation of a product is entangled with its aesthetics and cinematics.

Narrative movies employ a variety of literary devices and cinematic techniques to make the product more compelling and memorable for the viewers. Among these cinematic techniques is planting and payoff (P&P hereafter), also known as foreshadowing and Chekhov's gun. P&P is a narrative device in which a certain piece of information is introduced at some early stage of a storyline to set viewer's expectations for when a mystery unfolds at a later stage (usually the ending) (Li et al., 2020). Chekhov (1921) believes that if a gun is not going to serve any purposes (e.g., if it is not going to fire) in some future scene, it should not be presented in the story in the first place. This implies that a story's details, of any kind (visual, audial, linguistic, etc.), should be relevant to one another, planned, and coherent, and nothing should seem accidental or unexpected.

P&P ties scenes together and increases the cohesion of the plot (Howard & Mabley, 1995). It increases the engagement of viewers in the story by setting their expectations and encourages them to follow the storyline (Li et al., 2020). Viewers can discover secrets and hidden clues and curiously wait to see whether their guesses were right or wrong (Howard & Mabley, 1995). Moreover, P&P is closely related to the concept of surprise whereby the creation of a well-made surprise is dependent on appropriate planting (Li et al., 2020).

Any rendition of an AV product for viewers from a different language and/or cultural background requires careful consideration of such cinematics and aesthetics as P&P. However, despite the significance of this cinematic technique in the appreciation and comprehension of AV narratives, there is a notable paucity of studies on the topic in AVT. To the best knowledge of the authors, only two studies (Andrews, 2020; Gupta, 2020) have to date dealt with planting and payoff; thus, the topic deserves more academic attention.

As a predominantly dubbing country (Nord et al., 2015), Iran is witnessing a change in the viewer's tendency from dubbing to subtitling, due to technological accessibility and the enforcement of censorship in the official dubbing industry (Ameri & Khoshsaligheh, 2018). Almost all subtitles accessible to Iranian audiences are amateur subtitles or fansubs produced and released unofficially by movie fans, and subtitling is becoming the second predominant AVT mode in the Iranian mediascape after dubbing. Any comparison between official dubbing and amateur subtitling can provide a clearer picture of today's Iranian media landscape.

This study aims to integrate the two disciplines of translation studies and film studies to narrow the research gap regarding the rendition of P&P in official dubbing and amateur subtitling in the Iranian context. Therefore, the rendition of P&P in the subtitled and dubbed versions of ten Anglophone movies was studied. In a nutshell, the present study aimed to address the following research questions:

1. How were signifying codes dealt with in the dubbed and subtitled versions?
2. What signifying codes were omitted, manipulated, or added in each version?
3. What are the most used translation strategies and sub-strategies in each version?
4. Which version is more successful in the rendition of P&P?
5. What are the main reasons of failure in the rendition of P&P in each version?

2. Literature review

For years, the conduit between foreign AV products and Iranian AV consumers has been official dubbing. Dubbing is faced with limitations such as synchrony (Chaume, 2012), and, as a covert medium of translation, it has tremendous potential for altering the original (Pakar & Khoshsaligheh, 2022). As already mentioned, supervision by the Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance on the distribution of foreign AV products (Khoshsaligheh et al., 2017; Naficy, 2012; Zhirafar, 2014) has restricted official AVT practice (i.e., official dubbing). Consequently, unlike amateur subtitling, which majorly follows source culture norms and regulations (Khoshsaligheh et al., 2019; Massidda, 2015), official dubbing is required by law to follow a target-oriented approach and, thus, is faced with various types of manipulation and censorship (Khoshsaligheh & Ameri, 2016; Khoshsaligheh et al., 2020). Although Iranian viewers favor dubbing as it provides increased enjoyment and requires less mental activity on their part, and despite the fact they are more accustomed to dubbing due to their lifelong exposure to this mode, studies have demonstrated that a considerable number of viewers are in favor of the introduction of professional subtitling in Iran. This shows that Iranian audiences are ready to embrace new AVT modes (Ameri & Khoshsaligheh, 2018).

The recent technological developments have paved the way for amateur subtitling phenomenon which, despite being an illegal act, has been mushrooming in the past decade. Iranian amateur subtitlers or fanubbers produce nonprofessional subtitles without receiving any form of payment for the task, as avid fans of a particular AV genre and as a means of sharing the pleasure of watching AV products with others. They make the subtitles available online free of charge for Iranian movie viewers to consume. (Ameri & Khoshsaligheh, 2019; Khoshsaligheh & Fazeli Haghpahan, 2016). Unlike official dubbing which is faced with a lot of manipulation based on religious and cultural rules of the country, amateur subtitles often provide full access to the original without scenes being censored or deleted. This has been the main reason why Iranian viewers have turned to original versions, and consequently subtitles that are available in the black market (Khoshsaligheh et al., 2020).

Although amateur subtitling can provide full access to foreign original AV materials in the shortest time, studies have shown that the quality is not satisfactory (Pedersen, 2017, 2019). Amateur subtitling has been found to be compromised by poor quality, syntactic and semantic errors, translational mistakes when dealing with difficult items such as cultural items, idioms, and slang, and a lack of translational creativity. Moreover, it uses source-oriented and foreignizing translation strategies. These problems arise from subtitlers' insufficient knowledge of and proficiency in the source and target culture/language and their lack of training in translation. Believing that they must maintain and convey

everything in the original, some subtitlers also tend to violate technical issues and subtitling rules and regulations such as subtitle length (Ameri & Khoshsaligheh, 2019; Khoshsaligheh et al., 2019; Khoshsaligheh & Fazeli Haghpanah, 2016). Despite language barriers resulting from linguistic and cultural differences (Karamitroglou, 2000), Iranian subtitlers' most commonly used strategy is reported to be the maintenance of cultural references, jokes, taboos, and swear words, among others.

A glance at the bulk of research on AVT in Iran shows a wide range of studies, including amateur subtitling (Khoshsaligheh & Fazeli Haghpanah, 2016), socio-cultural issues in dubbing (Nord et al., 2015) and in fansubbing (Khoshsaligheh et al., 2018), attention allocation to half-space words and full-space words (Zahedi and Khoshsaligheh, 2021a) and attention to function and content words in Persian subtitles (Zahedi & Khoshsaligheh, 2019), and viewers' allocation to visual attention (Zahedi & Khoshsaligheh, 2021b). However, few have looked into cinematic and aesthetic aspects of movies and how AVT should deal or is dealing with them to foster aesthetic appreciation. Among the few studies, Delnavaz and Khoshsaligheh (2019) investigated the translation of allusions in Persian dubbing of eight Quentin Tarantino movies. According to the results, 'direct transfer' was the most frequent method in dubbing, followed by 'borrowing', 'literal translation', 'standard translation', 'extra-allusive addition', 'replacement by source language name', and 'omission', among others. These results show that source-oriented approach had been the preferred method of dubbing translators.

According to the authors' best knowledge, only two studies in the field of AVT have focused on P&P. One of these studies is carried out by Andrews (2020) who approached the topic from an accessibility perspective by studying foreshadowing in Audio Description (AD) of six movies streaming on Netflix's SVoD service. This study primarily attempted to investigate how foreshadowing is dealt with in the current AD practice. Based on qualitative research and stylistic analysis, the author concluded that foreshadowing can be achieved not only using burying techniques (i.e. reducing item prominence) but also by foregrounding them. Because stylistic features such as foreshadowing are crucial to the overall understanding of a movie, the author recommended that AD providers and companies take these factors into consideration.

The other more relevant research is carried out by Gupta (2020) who examined the use of P&P in Edgar Wright's *Cornetto* trilogy to determine whether this cinematic technique is communicated correctly in the subtitled and dubbed Spanish version of the movie. Moreover, the Chaume's signifying codes (Chaume, 2013) were extracted from the scenes to reveal which code has a higher frequency in P&P scenes. According to the results, the percent of successful P&Ps was 58% in the subtitled versions and 55% in the dubbed version. In addition, the iconographic code was the most frequent code in this technique (Gupta, 2020).

3. Theoretical framework

As the technique of P&P incorporates different semiotic codes in a narrative (from dialogues to editing and camera angles) to hide different clues (in the planting) whose synergy is revealed later in the movie (in the payoff), this study employed Multimodal Transcription (Taylor, 2016) and Chaume's signifying codes (Chaume, 2004) to describe the scenes containing this cinematic technique. The descriptions resulting from the analysis of the original versions were used as a point of comparison between the

dubbed and subtitled versions. Finally, to investigate the translation performance of the translator in each version, Chesterman's (2016) model for translation strategies was used.

3.1. Multimodal transcription approach and Chaume's signifying codes

To analyze the P&P scenes, multimodal transcription approach was integrated with Chaume's (2004) signifying codes. Multimodal transcription is an analytic tool in film studies which is used to investigate the inclusion and exclusion of different meaning-making modalities of an AV text (Abdi & Khoshsaligheh, 2018). Taylor (2016) suggests multimodal texts should be studied from a narrative, linguistic, semiotic, and cultural point of view. His view is that audiovisual products are a combination of semiotic modalities such as verbal, visual, and acoustic channels; therefore, AV translators must consider all these features when determining what should be transferred. In this model, the transcription includes a table which is divided into rows and columns and contains different information of scenes, including the screenshots, Tape Counter Readings (TCRs), dialogues, and sounds. Such a table can provide a classified description of visual frames, images, kinetic actions, soundtracks, dialogues, and subtitles.

Chaume (2004), in his multidisciplinary approach, provides a description of "signifying codes", including both linguistic and non-linguistic elements, which need to be transferred in the translation of AV products. In Chaume's point of view, translators should have knowledge of all the signifying codes (see Table 1) to undertake a comprehensive and coherent translation of an AV product. In this study, Talyor's multimodal transcription model and Chaume's signifying code model were integrated to describe the scenes. First, each scene in the original version was described based on the guidelines of Taylor's model. The description was then complemented by identifying and underlying the relevant signifying codes. Finally, the original scene was compared to its dubbed and subtitled counterpart scenes to indicate how each version has approached the signifying codes.

Table 1. Chaume's (2004) signifying codes and their description

Code	Short description
Linguistic code	utterances in the movie
Paralinguistic code	aspects of linguistic utterance such as tone, pause, etc.
Musical and special effects code	diegetic and nondiegetic music and songs
Sound arrangement code	off/on-screen and diegetic and nondiegetic voices
Iconographic code	visual icons, indices, and symbols
Photographic codes	lighting, perspective, or the use of colors
Planning code	camera angles and shot types (e.g., close-up)
Mobility code	movement of camera
Graphic codes	written text displayed on screen
Syntactic codes	scene editing

3.2. Chesterman's model for translation strategies

In the analysis of translations and identification of translation strategies, Chesterman's (2016) comprehensive model was used in this study. Chesterman divides translation strategies into three main groups namely syntactic, semantic, and pragmatic strategies. Each group has subcategories, and these strategies are not language-pair specific (see Table 2).

Table 2. Chesterman's (2016) translation strategies

Strategy	Subcategories
Syntactic or grammatical strategies (Manipulate the form of the text)	1. Literal translation 2. Loan, calque 3. Transposition 4. Unit shift 5. Phrase structure change 6. Clause structure change 7. Sentence structure change 8. Cohesion change 9. Level shift 10. Scheme change
Semantic strategies (Manipulate the meaning of the text)	1. Synonymy 1. Autonomy 2. Hyponymy 3. Converses 4. Abstraction change 5. Distribution change 6. Emphasis change 7. Paraphrase 8. Trope change 9. Other semantic changes
Pragmatic strategies (The result of a translator's global decisions)	1. Cultural filtering 2. Explicitness change 3. Information change 4. Interpersonal change 5. Illocutionary change 6. Coherence change 7. Partial translation 8. Visibility change 9. Transediting 10. Other pragmatic changes

4. Method

The nature of this research was comparative in that the original Anglophone movies were compared with their Persian official dubbing and amateur subtitling. The study followed a mixed-methods research design in which quantitative analysis followed qualitative analysis to provide a broader understanding of the object of the study.

4.1. Corpus

The corpus of this study was ten Anglophone movies selected through convenient sampling. The existence of P&P scenes was the most important selection criteria (purposive sampling). In total, 22 P&P scenes were identified and investigated in these ten movies. In every P&P scene, dialogues which were most relevant to the P&P were analyzed to find the translation strategies, and in total, 1498 words with their translation in the dubbed and subtitled versions were analyzed. In total, the corpus of this study included 1498 words in the original versions, 1599 words in the subtitled versions, and 1390 words in the dubbed versions. Table 3 lists the corpus of the study:

Table 3. The corpus of the study

No.	Original title	Persian title	Director	Producer(s)	Year	Genre	Length
1	The Shawshank redemption	رستگاری در شاوشنک	Frank Darabont	Niki Marvin	1994	Drama	2h 22m
2	Rain man	مرد بارانی	Barry Levinson	Mark Johnson, Rachel Pfeffer	1988	Drama	2h 13m
3	Jaws	آرواره ها	Steven Spielberg	Rechar D. Zanuck, David Brown	1975	Adventure, thriller	2h 4m
4	Jurassic park	پارک ژوراسیک	Steven Spielberg	Gerald. R Molen, Kathleen Kennedy,	1993	Action, adventure, sci-fi	2h 7m
5	Sleepless in Seattle	بی خوابی در سیاتل	Nora Ephron	Gary Foster	1993	Comedy, Drama, Romance	1h 45m
6	Adaptation	اقتباس	Spike Jonze	Jonathan Demme, Vincent Landay, Edward Saxon	2002	Comedy, Drama	1h 55m
7	Shutter island	جزیره شاتر	Martin Scorsese	Mike Medavoy, Arnold W.Messer, Bradley J. Fischer,	2010	Mystery, thriller	2h 18m

				Martin Scorsese			
8	Memento	یادگاری	Christopher Nolan	Suzanna Todd, Jennifer Todd	2000	Mystery, thriller	1h 53m
9	The shining	درخشش	Stanley Kubrick	Stanley Kubrick	1980	Drama, horror	2h 26m
10	The sixth sense	حس ششم	M. Night Shyamalan	Frank Marshall, Kathleen Kennedy, Barry Mendel	1999	Drama, mystery, thriller	1h 47m

4.2. Data collection and analysis

The original versions of the movies were watched, and P&P scenes were identified. The primary focus of this study was on verbal planting and payoffs, however, some of the studied cases had visual planting and verbal payoff or vice versa. Then, their TCR and dialogues in the original scenes and their counterpart dubbed and subtitled versions were extracted and transcribed. The P&P scenes were described using the Multimodal Transcription approach (Taylor, 2016) and Chaume's AV signifying codes (Chaume, 2013). Each P&P scene in the original was compared with their counterpart scene in the dubbed and subtitled versions in terms of rendition of the signifying codes. Finally, the translation of the linguistic elements of the original scenes were also investigated in the two Persian versions.

Generally, there is a connection between P&P, and this connection should manifest itself in translation. If AV translator fails to reestablish the connection between P&P scenes, the scenes and the items in them might seem meaningless and the viewers would not be able to relate them to one another. On this basis, the dubbed and subtitled versions were qualitatively scrutinized to investigate whether they were successful in preserving meaningful relation between planting scenes and their pay off. Finally, the number of successful instances in each version and the reasons for the failure in the rendition of the P&Ps were reported.

5. Results

5.1. Qualitative analyses

This section presents a categorized selection of qualitative analyses. This categorization is based on notable aspects of the original P&P scenes and their Persian dubbed and subtitled counterparts. The underlined sentences are considered as the most important sentences contributing to building the P&P effect, and thus, the translation of these sentences in the dubbed and subtitled versions was investigated.

5.1.1. Syntactic code manipulation: Censorship

As official dubbing must follow the regulations enforced by government, censorship in dubbed movies is a common practice. However, such a practice can directly affect the aesthetic appreciation and, in

many cases, the general comprehension of the plot of a movie. For instance, in the movie *Shawshank Redemption*, the poster of a half-naked actress (iconographic code) is shown and referred to at different points in the movie. At final scenes of the movie, it turns out the main character had hung the poster on the wall to hide a hole he had dug to escape the prison.

Table 4. The poster: Planting 1




The poster: Planting 1		
TCR	00:08:55	00:09:44
shots		
codes	<p>Red hears the (diegetic) sound of siren (sound effects code) and then we hear him narrating (nondiegetic sound: sound arrangement code) Andy's request. The linguistic code (Red's narration) starts from the last shot of the previous sequence and then a new shot starts which shows a big bus arriving at the prison (Syntactic code). The camera (planning code), showing a medium-shot tilts up, to have a bird eye-view of the prison (mobility code). As the shot moves on the sound of siren changes into a soft music (musical code) which combined with the bird-eye-shot of the prison make the viewer feel the greatness and non-penetrability of the prison walls and buildings.</p>	
	Source Text	Subtitled version Dubbed version
	<p>[Red narrates:] <u>So when Andy Dufresne comes to me in 1949 and asked me to smuggle Rita Hayworth into the prison for him, I told him "No problem".</u></p>	<p>وقتی اندی دوفرین در سال ۱۹۴۹ اومد و از من خواست تا یک پوستر ریتا هیوورث براش داخل زندان قاچاق کنم بهش گفتم مشکلی نیست.</p>
	<p>بنابراین وقتی اندی دوفرین در ۱۹۴۹ پیشم اومد و ازم خواست «ریتا هیوورث» رو براش قاچاقی بیارم توی زندان بهش گفتم غمت نباشه.</p>	

Table 5. The poster: Planting 2

The poster: Planting 2		
TCR	00:41:23	00:42:40
shots		
codes	<p>Prisoners are watching Gilda. Andy enters the salon and sits behind Red (mobility code). They start talking (linguistic code) and through direct cuts the shots shift between the close-up of Red and Andy (planning code) and the movie being watched by the prisoners (syntactic code). Gilda (Rita Hayworth) appears in the movie (iconographic code) and the sound of the prisoner’s applause and cheering is heard (Sound arrangement code). Red and Andy start talking (linguistic code) about her, and Andy makes his request. The movie dialogues are being heard in the background (sound arrangement code). Red gets surprised but he accepts Andy’s request, and then Andy leaves the salon with a slight smile on his face.</p>	
Source Text	Subtitled version	Dubbed version


[Red and Andy are talking:] Andy: I understand you're a man that knows how to get things. Red: Yeah, I'm known to locate certain things from time to time. <u>What do you want?</u>	شنیدم تو میتونی یه چیزایی رو گیر بیاری اره بعضی وقتا یه چیزایی رو ردیف می کنم، چی میخوای؟ ریتا هیوورث چی؟ میتونی بیاریش؟ چند هفته ای طول می کشه هفته؟ خب آره، متاسفم که میگم عکسش همین الان تو جیب شلوارم نیست، ولی گیر میارم، خیالت راحت باشه. متشکرم ممنونم	شنیدم که تو آدمی هستی که می دونه چطور همه چیز گیر بیاره آره، معروفم به اینکه گهگاه چیزهای خاصی رو جاسازی می کنم. حالا چی میخوای؟ ریتا هیوورث چی؟ می تونی گیرش بیاری؟ چند هفته وقت می بره هفته؟ من که همین الان آماده و بسته بندی شده توی زیرشلواریم ندارمش. بیخش که اینو میگم، اما گیرش میارم. خیالت راحت
– Rita Hayworth – What? – Can you get her? – Take a few weeks. – Weeks? – Well, yeah, Andy. I don't have her stuffed down the front of my pants right now, I'm sorry to say. But I'll get her. Relax. – Thanks.		

Table 6. The poster: Planting 3

The poster: Planting 3		
TCR	00:47:29	00:48:15
shots		
codes	Red is narrating and talking about the new stuff that he had received (nondiegetic sound: sound arrangement code), including Andy's request. Then a new shot begins (syntactic code), Andy enters his cell and finds a rapped-up poster on his bed. He opens it (iconographic code) and the camera has a close-up of his smiling face (planning code). Then the camera moves from his face to his bed (mobility code), and shows a welcome note from Red (graphic code). The narration (nondiegetic sound: sound arrangement code) and a soft music (musical code) are hearing simultaneously.	
Source text	Subtitled version	Dubbed version
[Red narrates:] I also got a big shipment that week. Cigarettes, chewing gum, sipping whisky, playing cards with naked ladies on them, you name it. <u>And of course, the most important item. Rita Hayworth herself.</u>	در اون هفته یک محموله ی بزرگ هم دریافت کردم. سیگار، آدامس، ویسکی، پاسور با عکس زن های برهنه، و هر چی که بگین. و البته مهمترین قلم: شخص ریتا هیوورث.	محموله ی اون هفته هم خیلی بزرگ بود. سیگار، آدامس، بطری بغلی، ورق بازی یا هر چی که بخواین. و البته مهم ترین چیز: شخص ریتا هیوورث. مجانیه، خوش آمدی.

(متن یادداشت: مجانی، خوش
اومدی.)

Table 7. The poster: Payoff

The poster: Payoff		
TCR	01:53:26	01:54:31
shots		
codes	The chief, guards and Red are in Andy's cell, and the camera has a close-up of the chief face in the frame (planning code). The chief asks a few questions from Red (linguistic code), and then he gets angry, picks some piece of rocks and throws them toward Red, guards, and the Rita Hayworth's poster on the wall (iconographic code). The rock tears up the poster and falls behind it, and the chief finds out that behind the poster is empty. He tears up the poster and sees the tunnel. The camera moves back through the tunnel and shows chief's frustrated face at the end of the tunnel (mobility code) and thrilling music starts to play (musical code).	
Source Text	Subtitled version	Dubbed version
-	-	-

As indicated in Tables 4, 5, 6 and 7, an iconographic code, that is the poster of the actress, was used as a clue in the plantings and later used in the payoff to unfold the story. One planting is verbal, the rest are verbal-visual, and the payoff is visual. In the dubbed version, the actress's picture and poster is omitted or better to say censored from both the plantings and payoff scenes by manipulating the syntactic code. This makes understanding the connection between the verbal references to the poster and how this unshown poster is related to the escape almost impossible for the viewers of this version. Although the translator of the dubbed version has made some compensatory measures by making the words poster and picture (پوستر، عکس، see planting 1 and 2) explicit, the visual manipulation has resulted in the failure of this version in rendering the planting and payoff.

However, the subtitled version has made no code manipulation. Moreover, by using appropriate translation strategies (mainly syntactic strategies) the same connection as the original is established between the plantings and payoff scenes. Moreover, in the first planting, the subtitle has put the name of the actress in a quotation mark which attracts the viewers' attention to the name, while at the same time making the translator more visible.

5.1.2. Wordplays

Wordplay can be problematic for translators, or even impossible to transfer, due to the linguistic and cultural differences. In *The Rain Man*, there is a P&P scene containing a wordplay. The verbal similarity between the words "rain man" and "Raymond" makes this P&P interesting and notable for the English speaker viewer. In the dubbed version, the word "rain man" is borrowed "رین من" in both the planting and the payoff. The literal meaning of "rain man" is lost, but the similarity of "rain man"

and “Raymond” is preserved. On the other hand, in the subtitled version, rain man is translated to «مرد بارانی» using calque. The viewers would not be able to link «مرد بارانی» and «رین من» if they are not familiar with English language, therefore, the connection between the planting and the payoff is lost:

Table 8. Rain man: Planting



Rain man: Planting			
TCR	00:12:11	00:12:25	
shots			
codes	Charlie and Susanna are talking (linguistic code) in Charlie's father's house. At the beginning of dialogue, the camera has a close-up of Charlie (planning code), and then the frame changes and the camera capture Charlie's back (mobility code) and we can see Susanna's face and her reaction. The sound of rain (sound arrangement code) is being heard during the shot. Finally, telling his last line, Charlie leaves the frame.		
Source text	Subtitled version	Dubbed version	
[Charlie and Susanna are talking:] Charlie: <u>When I was a kid and I got scared, the Rain Man would come and sing to me.</u> Susanna: <u>Rain what?</u>	وقتی بچه بودم و ترسیدم، مرد بارونی میومد و برام میخوند.	وقتی بچه بودم رین من واسم آواز می خوند.	
– <u>You know, one of those imaginary childhood friends.</u>	مرد چی چی؟	رین چی؟	
– <u>What happened to him?</u>	میدونی، یکی ازهمون شخصیت های خیالی دوران کودکی	دوست تخیلی من در بچگی	
– <u>Nothing. I just grew up.</u>	چی به سرش اومد؟	بعدش چی شد؟	
	هیچی، دیگه بزرگ شدم	هیچی بعدش بزرگ شدم	
		نه به اندازه کافی	

Table 9. Rain Man: Payoff

Rain man: Payoff		
TCR	01:12:29	01:13:03
shots		
codes	Raymond is brushing his teeth when charlie comes into the bathroom and starts talking to him (linguistic code). The camera has a close up of charlie and Raymond in the frame (plannig code). The sound of water (sound arrangmant code) is being heard. In the last line Raymond leaves the bathroom and camera has a close up of Charlie's surprised face (planning code).	
Source text	Subtitled version	Dubbed version

[Charlie and Raymond are talking:]	فکر میکنی بامزه س؟	—	واست خنده داره؟	—
Charlie: You think that's funny?	آره مرد بارونی بامزه با دندونای	—	رین من خنده دار	—
Raymond: Yeah. Funny Rain Man.	بامزه	—	چی گفتی؟	—
Funny teeth.	چی گفتی؟	—	دندونای خنده دار	—
— What did you say?	دندونای بامزه. بشورش	—	دهنتو بشور	—
— Funny teeth. Rinse.	چی گفتی... چی گفتی دندون بامزه؟	—	چرا گفتی دندونای خنده	—
— Why did you say... Why did you say funny teeth?	گفتی دندون بامزه، مرد بارونی بامزه	—	دار؟	—
— You said funny teeth, funny Rain Man.	مرد بارونی؟ من گفتم مرد بارونی؟	—	تو گفتی رین من خنده دار	—
— Rain Man? I said Rain Man?	آره مرد بارونی بامزه	—	رین من؟	—
— Yeah, funny Rain Man.	من سعی می کردم بگم ریموند اما	—	اره	—
— <u>Was I trying to say Raymond,</u>	رین من از دهنم میومد بیرون؟ (وقتی	—	من گفتم رین من؟	—
<u>and it came out Rain Man?</u>	بچه بودن)	—	رین من خنده دار	—
— <u>Yeah, funny Rain Man.</u>	آره رین من بامزه	—	من گفتم ریموند تو رین	—
— <u>You? You're the Rain Man?</u>	تو... تو مرد بارونی هستی؟	—	من شنیدی؟	—
			آره رین من خنده دار	—
			تو؟ رین من تویی؟	—

5.1.3. Graphic code

One of the challenges of an AV translator can be the translation of graphic codes. However, the task can become more complicated when a graphic code is used to plant a clue. In the movie *The Shining*, a graphic code is twisted by a wordplay (REDRUM). The first planting scene shows the word REDRUM written on a door (visual). In the second planting, the word is referred to verbally, and finally, in the payoff the word redrum is repeated twice by one of the characters, and then the picture of the door is shown in the mirror indicating that REDRUM is murder spelled backwards. Here, the story starts to unfold, and the viewers can guess murder is about to happen.

Table 10. Redrum: Planting 1


Redrum: Planting 1		
TCR	01:19:18	01:19:20
Shots		
codes	Danny is in his bed when he sees a vision of the word "redrum" which is written on the door (graphic code). The sound of his parents' talking is being heard on the background (sound arrangement code) and a thrilling music is being played (musical code).	
	Source Text	Dubbed version

Table 11. Redrum: Planting 2

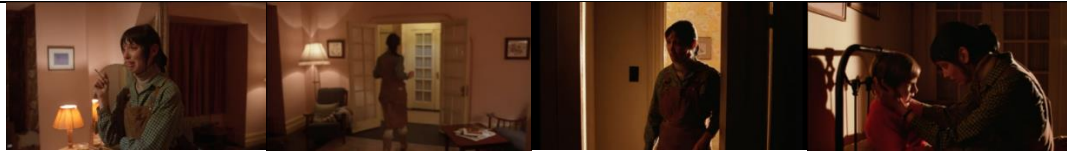
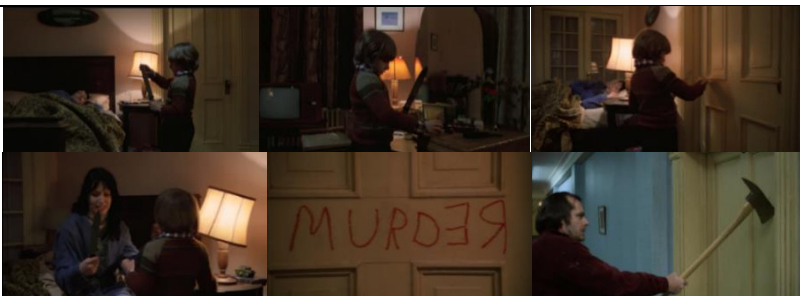
Redrum: Planting 2			
TCR	01:32:28		01:32:49
shots			
codes	<p>Wendy is smoking and walking in the room when she hears Danny's voice (nondiegetic sound) who is repeating the word "redrum". She rushes to Danny's room, the camera moves with her (mobility code), and finds him sitting on the bed. Thrilling music is being played (musical code).</p>		
Source Text		Subtitled version	Dubbed version
[Wendy is talking to Danny:]		رد-رام رد-رام	خونریزی! خونریزی! خونریزی! —
—	<u>Redrum. Redrum.</u>	چی شده، عزیزم؟ —	دنی؟ —
—	What's the matter, hon?	رد-رام —	خونریز! خونریزی! —
—	Redrum!	—	دنی چت شده عزیزم؟ —
—	Are you having a bad dream? Hon?	داری خواب بد می بینی؟ —	خونریزی! —
			داری خواب بد میبینی؟ —

Table 12. Redrum: Payoff

Redrum: Payoff			
TCR	01:58:44	02:01:10	
shots			
codes	<p>Danny walks out of his room toward his mother who is sleeping, and the camera moves with him (mobility code). He is whispering the word “redrum”. He picks up a knife, then he goes toward his mother’s drawer and picks up a lipstick. He writes the word “redrum” on the door (graphic code) and starts shouting “redrum”. Wendy wakes up and sees that the word “redrum” is the word “murder” in the mirror (graphic code). The camera shows a close-up of her terrified face (planning code) and at the same time Jack starts breaking the door from outside. Thrilling music is being played during the whole scene (musical code).</p>		
Source text		Subtitled version	Dubbed version

[Wendy is talking to Danny:]	رد-رام رد-رام	- خونریزی
- Redrum.	دنی بس کن	- خونریزی
Redrum.	«جنایت»	- خونریزی
- Danny, stop it!	کلمه REDRUM «شراب سرخ» در آینه به صورت MURDER «جنایت» دیده میشه.	- دنی بس کن!


As Tables 10, 11, and 12 demonstrate, in the first planting the graphic code is not translated in both dubbed and subtitled versions. In the second planting, where the graphic code (REDRUM) is referred to verbally, the dubbed version has used the word bloodshed, “خونریزی”, as a synonym for murder which has resulted in an explicitness change. The subtitled version, however, has used loan translation (ردرام).

In the payoff, the dubbed version has used the word bloodshed for both the times REDRUM is said verbally and when it is shown in the mirror. Thus, the dubbed version has rendered the graphic code by adding a sound arrangement code. In the subtitled version, loan translation of REDRUM is used, and when the word appears in the mirror, the subtitle has used synonymy by using the word Crime (جنایت) instead of murder (قتل). The subtitle has become more visible by putting the word Crime in a quotation mark and adding some explanation. Despite the efforts made by the translators in both versions, the connection between the scenes is not very clear, especially because the graphic code is not translated in the first planting.

5.1.4. Translation strategy consistency


In the movie *Jaws*, some air tanks are used to give clues on how the shark dies in the end. Even in the conversation, the characters talk about the possibility of explosion of air tanks and the possibility of it to be eaten by the shark. In the payoff scene, the shark eats the air tank, Martin (the main character) shoots at it, it explodes, and kills the shark.

Table 13. The air tank: Planting

The air tank: Planting		
TCR	01:13:43	01:14:04
shots		
codes	Martin, Quint and Hooper are in the boat. Martin pulls a knot and suddenly air tanks fall on the floor and he falls too. The camera shows the tanks rolling in the floor and Hooper's hands catch them (mobility code). Hooper gets scared and yells at Martin and explains the danger of the tanks (linguistic code). The camera has three of them in the frame (planning code). Then Quint starts talking (linguistic code), Hooper leaves the frame, and the camera moves toward Martin and Quint (mobility code). The sound of sea is being heard during the shot (sound arrangement code).	
	Source text	Dubbed version

[Hooper yells at Martin, he answers, and Quint says the last line:]	مارتین، لعنت به اون. این هوای فشرده است.	مواظب باش مارتین. این هوای فشرده ست.
- Damn it, Martin! This is compressed air.	این دیگه چه جور گره ایه که زدی؟	این دیگه چه جور گره ایه که زدی؟
- What the hell kind of a knot was that?	-تو گره اشتباهی رو باز کردی. تو پیچ این تانک ها رو می پیچونی و اونا هم منفجر میشن.	تو طنابو عوضی کشیدی. اگه ما مواظب این کپسولهای هوا نباشیم یهو منفجر میشن.
- You pulled the wrong one! You screw around with these tanks, and they're going to blow up.	آره، این واقعاً چیز خوبیه، تو ابزار گرون قیمتی رو با خودت به اینجا آوردی.	بله خیلی عالی و سایل گرون قیمتی با خودتون آوردین آقای هوپر.
- Yeah, that's real fine, expensive gear you've brought out here, Mr. Hooper. I don't know what that bastard shark's going to do with it. might eat it I suppose. Seen one eat a rocking' chair one time	من نمیدونم که اون کوسه حرومزاده تصمیم داره با اون چیکار کنه.	نمیدونم اون کوسه ی بی پدر باهاشون چیکار می کنه ممکنه بخورتشون.

Table 14. The air tank: Payoff

The air tank: Payoff		
TCR	01:58:15	02:00:33
shots		
codes	<p>The camera has a close up of Martin and the shark in the boat (planning code). Martin takes the air tank and puts it in the shark's mouth, then the shot changes (syntactic code) and the camera shows the drowning boat. The sound of the sea is being heard (sound arrangement code). The camera shows the sea and the shark which is coming near the boat (mobility code), then it shows Martin from a bird-eye-view (mobility code). He is on the drowning boat and loading his gun. Along with the sound of the sea, thrilling music is being played (musical code). The shark gets near the boat, and we can see Martin and the shark from different angles; from up, down, and even under the water (mobility code). The camera shows the shark and the air tank from under the water (mobility code), and then shows Martin who is waiting to see the shark. He shoots at shark several times, the camera shows the path of bullets through the water (mobility code), and finally he manages to shoot the air tank which explodes the shark. The camera shows the shark's flesh and blood all around the sea, and then shoots a close up of Martin (planning code) which is laughing aloud. The thrilling music turns to a soft music (musical code) which shows Martin's happiness and peace.</p>	
	Source text	Dubbed version

[Martin is talking to the shark:]	مخزن رو بهم نشون بده	کپسولو نشونم بده
– All right, come on.	منفجر شو	بیا بالا،
<u>Show me the tank.</u>	لبخند بزن، حرومزاده	
<u>Blow up!</u>		دهن لعنتیتو باز کن
<u>Smile, you son of a bitch!</u>		

The dubbed version has consistently used the word “کپسول” as the equivalent for tank while the subtitled version has used two different strategies and thus equivalents (تانک-مخزن) for the word in each scene. Apart from the fact that these are not good equivalents for the word, the inconsistency in translation strategy has resulted in a disconnection between the P&P scene. As far as the AV aspects of the movie are concerned, the viewers can easily understand that these are the same tanks shown and referred to earlier, however, the subtitled version has been unsuccessful in rendering the planting and payoff.

5.2. Quantitative analysis

An analysis of the quantitative results of the study is presented in this section, including signifying codes, translation strategies, and renderings of planting and payoff scenes.

5.2.1. Signifying codes

A total of 298 signifying codes were identified in 71 scenes. In five scenes of the dubbed version, code loss occurred due to the censorship. During qualitative analyses, it was demonstrated that iconographic code and graphic code can be used to plant clues, thus, their rendition and translation is significant. In one instance iconographic code was used as a planting tool (in *Shawshank Redemption*, see section 5.1.1), and the censorship of the iconographic code in dubbed version resulted in failure in rendition of planting and payoff. With regards to graphic codes, a total of six instances were found. The dubbed version rendered four instances by adding sound arrangement code in which one of the characters read the translation of the visually presented linguistic information.

In the subtitled version, no manipulations were made to the codes. With regards to graphic code, only one case was left untranslated. The subtitlers tended to translate graphic codes in their subtitles using parentheses or notes which resulted in making themselves visible.

Table 15. Frequency of signifying codes

	Omitted Codes	Added Codes
Dubbed version	7	4 Sound Arrangement Codes
Subtitled version	0	5 Linguistic Codes
		Total number of codes 298

5.2.2. Translation strategies

Following Chesterman (2016), the strategies used to translate the linguistic codes in the dubbed and subtitled version were identified. In total, 154 sentences of the original version were studied, and a total of 286 and 279 translation strategies were identified in the subtitled and dubbed versions. The frequency of strategies is shown in Table 16.

Table 16. Frequency of translation strategies

Strategy	Subtitled version		Dubbed version	
	Count	Percentage %	Count	Percentage%
Literal translation	136	47.6	82	30.3
Calque	3	1	0	0
Loan translation	4	1.4	4	1.5
Cohesion change	5	1.7	6	2.2
Transposition	6	2.1	11	4.1
Clause structure change	2	0.7	2	0.7
Unit shift	8	2.8	8	3
Level shift	4	1.4	0	0
Phrase structure change	5	1.7	7	2.6
Scheme change	3	1	3	1.1
Sentence structure change	4	1.4	7	2.6
Total (Syntactic Strategy)	180	62.8%	130	48%
Hyponymy	4	1.4	4	1.5
Trope change	7	2.4	8	3
Paraphrase	23	8	28	10.3
Synonymy	4	1.4	8	3
Distribution change	6	2.1	5	1.8
Emphasis change	7	2.4	11	4.1
Antonymy	1	0.3	0	0
Other semantic changes	2	0.7	2	0.7
Abstraction change	0	0	1	0.4
Total (Semantic Strategy)	54	17.7%	67	24.7%
Information change	14	4.9	24	8.9
Cultural filtering	0	0	7	2.6

Explicitness change	17	5.9	23	8.5
Visibility change	9	3.1	0	0
Illocutionary change	5	1.7	6	2.2
Coherence change	3	1	5	1.8
Partial translation	4	1.4	6	2.2
Interpersonal change	0	0	3	1.1
Total (Pragmatic Strategy)	52	18%	74	27.3%
Total	286	100	279	100

As the Table demonstrates, the most used strategies in the subtitled version were literal translation (136, 47%), paraphrase (23, 8%), explicitness change (17, 5.9%), and information change (14, 5.9%), respectively. The most used strategies in the dubbed version were literal translation (82, 30%), paraphrase (28, 10%), information change (24, 8.9%), and explicitness change (23, 8.5%), respectively.

With regards to general strategy, subtitlers preferred syntactic strategies (62.8%) over pragmatic (18%) and semantic strategies (17.7%). The same was true for the dubbed version, yet distribution of the usage of general strategy seems more balanced with syntactic strategy 48%, pragmatic strategy 27.3%, and semantic strategy 24.7%. The other notable difference is the occurrence of visibility change (9, 3.1%) in the subtitled version while, in the dubbed version, no instances of this strategy was observed. Moreover, unlike the subtitled version that did not use cultural filtering, the dubbed version used the strategy seven times (2.6%).

5.2.3. Rendition of planting and payoff scenes

As Table 17 indicates, the level of success in the rendition of the planting and payoffs in the dubbed and subtitled version is the same. In the dubbed version, the main reasons for the failure in rendering the planting and payoffs were manipulation of syntactic code (censorship) and use of cultural filtering. In the subtitled version, the main reason for failure was in the inconsistent use of translation strategies (as shown in section 5.1.4) to render the main clue in the plantings and payoffs and translation inaccuracy.

Table 17. Rate of success in the rendition of the planting and payoffs in the dubbed and subtitled version

		Original planting and payoffs	Successful rendition of planting and payoffs	
			Dubbed version	Subtitled version
1	The Shawshank redemption	5	3	5
2	Rain man	1	1	0

3	Jaws	2	1	1
4	Jurassic Park	3	3	2
5	Sleepless in Seattle	2	1	1
6	Adaptation	1	0	0
7	Shutter island	4	4	4
8	Memento	1	1	1
9	The shining	2	1	1
10	The sixth sense	1	1	1
Total		22	16	16
		Percent	72.7	72.7

6. Discussion and conclusion

The aesthetic and cinematic aspects of movies make movie watching an enjoyable experience. Among the different cinematic techniques that boost movie watching experience is P&P which is a screen writing technique that can be used to create suspense and twist endings (Andrews, 2020). AV translators' duty, no matter for what mode they are translating, should take into consideration such aesthetic and cinematic aspects as planting and payoff. This article aimed to shed light on the rendition of P&P scenes by investigating Persian subtitled and official dubbed versions of ten Anglophone movies. In the following, the major findings of the study are discussed.

The findings of the study corroborate with those of Ameri and Khoshsaligheh (2018). As official dubbing studios are required to follow rules laid down by the government with regards to culturally and religiously inappropriate content, censorship and signifying codes manipulation is inevitable in this AVT mode. Such manipulations can result in omission of a clue in a planting, and even the whole planting and payoff. As indicated in the result section, censorship breaks the ties and relationship between planting and payoff scenes. That is why for the viewers of dubbed versions, the ending, and sometimes the whole storyline, seem incomprehensible or rationally unexpected. Another relevant finding of the study was the occurrence of cultural filtering of inappropriate linguistic content in the dubbed version. Similarly, such changes can also influence appreciation and comprehension of planting and payoff.

In contrast to dubbing, amateur subtitling, which is released illegally, is not faced with any restrictions. As demonstrated in the results, no signifying code omission or cultural filtering strategy was observed in the subtitled versions. Subtitlers leave signifying codes intact and render linguistic contents with the least changes. As a result, in subtitling the relationship between the scenes is not affected, and P&P is successfully rendered. This finding is consistent with the previous studies in which the main strategy to translate taboo words was reported to be maintaining (Khoshsaligheh et al., 2017).

Although subtitling inherently can provide better access to original planting and payoff, the result of the study indicated that the rate of success in the subtitled and dubbed version was the same in the

studied corpus. This finding is in contrast with Gupta (Gupta, 2020) who demonstrated that compared to dubbing, subtitling was more successful in the rendition of planting and payoffs. Further analysis of the reasons for failure in the subtitled versions indicated that they suffered from inconsistent use of translation strategy for the translation of the same linguistic items in the P&P scenes. Another factor contributing to the failure was translation mistake or inaccuracy which is in line with the results of previous studies (Ameri & Khoshsaligheh, 2019; Khoshsaligheh et al., 2019; Khoshsaligheh & Fazeli Haghpanah, 2016).

It is noteworthy that both dubbed and subtitled versions of the films used syntactic strategy and literal translation as the most frequent translation strategies. Chesterman (2016) states that this technique is the default value for translation, and the translator is allowed to deviate from literal translation only if he/she has to and in situations where this strategy may not work. The number of occurrences of literal translation in the subtitled version shows that the general approach of subtitlers has been source-oriented translation which is previously reported in the literature (Khoshsaligheh & Fazeli Haghpanah, 2016). The use of visibility change in the subtitled versions to explain different items or even the key point in the planting and payoffs is another interesting finding of this study which requires further studies in the future.

The findings regarding dubbing corroborate with Delnavaz and Khoshsaligheh (2019) who found direct transfer to be the most frequent translational strategy. In the dubbed version, the distribution of translation strategies seems more balanced. This can be used to claim that dubbing translators are more skillful and experienced and have a broader knowledge of translation. Moreover, the higher number of strategies such as paraphrase and information change also highlight the importance of another restriction that dubbing is faced with, that is synchrony (Chaume, 2012). To keep different types of synchronies, dubbing translator has to change linguistic codes, and this might negatively affect plantings and payoffs and the connection between them.

Finally, each of the signifying codes suggested by Chaume (2004) can be used separately or collectively to plant a clue and create a payoff. It can be said that all codes work together, and if they are not transferred appropriately in the process of translation, the whole meaning will be affected (Callahan, 2019). This makes the analysis of signifying codes and the relationship between them imperative for AV translators. Graphic and iconographic codes should, as indicated in the present study, be carefully examined to grasp their role in relation to other codes and the plot as a whole, and to develop a translation strategy appropriate for their rendition. The results showed that omission or not rendering such rudimentary codes in dubbing and amateur subtitling can result in the loss of planting and payoff.

The present study was the first attempt to describe rendition of P&P in the context of Persian AVT. The results draw our attention to the importance of considering the links between signifying codes, linguistic content, arrangement of scenes, and general storyline while translating a narrative AV product. The findings can be used by subtitlers, dubbing translators, translator trainers and trainees. Further studies can investigate larger corpus of movies and other AVT modes. Moreover, it is recommended that future studies focus on finding strategies to compensate for code loss because of censorship in dubbing.

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Multilingualism and Plurilingualism in Teaching the Lingua Franca: A Critical Review

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Abstract

This study investigates the groundbreaking and significant integration of plurilingualism and multilingualism within the context of teaching English as a Foreign Language (EFL). The incorporation of this approach presents a potential for redefining educational paradigms to promote inclusivity and equality. However, it also presents other issues that necessitate careful examination, including theoretical uncertainties, practical challenges, and constraints associated with critical pedagogy. The subject matter beyond the boundaries of academic discussion, exerting influence on the educational experiences of individuals globally, and necessitates an approach that is attuned to the specific situation. It is imperative to recognize the inherent complexities of languages, as they serve not only as means of communication, but also as cultural, authoritative, and individual manifestations. To address this intricate task in an effective manner, it is imperative for future scholars to embrace a dual approach characterized by boldness and humility, while acknowledging the extensive global ramifications involved. The achievement that could be attained in this domain requires a denial of overly simplistic resolutions and demands an active, intricate comprehension of the intricate aspects of language and education.

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1. Introduction

The phenomenon of multilingualism has emerged as a tangible occurrence in various regions across the globe due to the influences of globalization and the changing demographics that have led to the formation of multilingual societies (Natsyuk & Osidak, 2023). Rooted in pluralism theory, multilingualism and plurilingualism are important and relatively new phenomena that are opposite to monolingual and monocultural orientations (Galante & Cruz, 2021) and are frequent research concerns in many areas of humanities such as media studies (e.g., Khoshsaligheh et al. 2022; Eriss & Khoshsaligheh, 2023) besides language education. Knowledge of many languages or the acceptance of linguistic diversity within a single community is what the Council of Europe (2001, p. 4) calls “multilingualism”. To emphasize the idea of plurilingual competence, the Council of Europe has favored the word plurilingualism since the early 2000s (Castellotti & Moore, 2002). According to the Council of Europe (2001), plurilingualism emphasizes that as an individual’s exposure to language broadens within their cultural environment, including the language spoken at home and that of the wider society, the individual does not compartmentalize these languages and cultures in a strictly segregated manner. Instead, they develop a communicative competence that integrates and interconnects all their language-related knowledge and experiences.

This concept highlights the need to embrace varying degrees of mastery of the language learned and the interconnectedness of the individual's developed linguistic abilities. Some scholars have argued that plurilingualism is a defining feature of research conducted in French-speaking countries. However, the term “plurilingualism” is not even included in English dictionaries and is searched for on the Internet ten times less often than “multilingualism” (Tremblay, 2010).

This research is aided by the distinction between multilingualism and plurilingualism. The former results in the implementation of syllabi offering the opportunity to learn different languages separately, while the latter recognizes the interconnectedness of the sociolinguistic and psycholinguistic dimensions of language acquisition and use. Plurilingual learning settings that allow students to rely on their varied and developing capabilities across their range of target languages would be easier to conceive if sociolinguistic and psycholinguistic considerations were given equal weight.

Indeed, in recent years, the field of English Language Teaching (ELT) has faced some challenges and problems that may partially due to globalization. As a consequence of globalization, a global village has been formed wherein people should learn to adapt to cultural and social transformations (Slaughter & Cross, 2020; Sadeghi, 2012). Within this particular setting, it is imperative to prioritize the exploration of various symbolic systems in order to facilitate the formation and sharing of meaning and information. This approach is crucial for enhancing the communicative abilities of learners within their specific socio-cultural milieu. (Slaughter & Cross, 2020).

The emergence of pluralistic and multicultural societies is an important sign of societal change. In such societies, it is necessary to apply a multicultural/pluralistic lens to education. Indeed, a paradigm shift towards pluralism is observed in educational systems and societies to support the idea of multiple competing value systems and moralities, where no value system is superior to the other (Stika, 2012). As a result, the emergence of pluralistic education has provided a novel framework that aims to foster

alternative cognitive processes and knowledge systems, emphasizing the significance of cultural and linguistic diversity.

Consequently, a new generation of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students has been formed with new needs. To fulfill these new needs, some phenomena have emerged, including the change of attitudes towards cultural tolerance and openness, the establishment of pluralistic views towards education, and multicultural/pluralistic consideration of the social environment in education (Giselbrecht, 2009). According to Giselbrecht (2009), in pluralism theory, it is recognized that identities, customs, languages, traditions, and histories are constructed and reconstructed in connection to and from interaction with one another, and that different articulation is always a risk for transformation.

Pluralistic/multicultural teaching approaches aim to reach innovative solutions to new educational requirements of a multicultural and multilingual society (Galante & Cruz, 2021). Pluralism, as a multilayered concept, refers to a context in which different languages, cultures, viewpoints, thoughts, ideas, values, norms, races, and political arrangements, among other things, co-exist peacefully (Hongladarom, 2011). In pluralism, diversity, not similarity, is the foundation of growth. As an outcome of our social system complexity, pluralism is a democratic principle in the sense that it combines diversities well (Colombo, 2013). Interestingly, pluralism goes beyond the co-existence of pluralities towards the combination of pluralities to support the idea that difference is better than similarity, and that difference is a value that is more profitable than homogeneity (Colombo, 2013). Pluralism is a social involvement model wherein any specific social configuration is limited rather than open (McConnell, 2008).

2. Critical pedagogy and the education system

According to academic literature, critical pedagogy can be defined as a “philosophical framework in the field of education that has emerged by incorporating and employing principles derived from critical theory” (Kincheloe et al., 1997). This approach perceives the act of teaching as inherently political, challenging the notion of knowledge neutrality, and emphasizing that topics of social justice and democracy are inseparable from the processes of teaching and learning (Giroux, 2007). Critical Pedagogy, commonly linked to renowned educational theorists Paulo Freire and Henry Giroux, is a compelling educational framework that warrants thorough examination. Its fundamental principles are not readily apparent and could therefore significantly alter one's perspectives on education, society, and power dynamics.

According to Freire (1996), language teaching cannot be free from the influence of ideology and power. The proposition entails the teaching of original languages to ethnic minorities. Additionally, it emphasizes the importance of cultivating an appreciation for the aesthetic and intrinsic worth of these minority languages, in parallel with the dominant language of the host society. Furthermore, it is recommended to offer guidance in the dominant language to individuals, allowing them to proficiently engage in socially acceptable communication and effectively express views that will contribute to their quest for liberation.

3. English hegemony

Tsuda (2008) defines English hegemony as the prevailing dominance of the English language over other languages in the realm of communication, resulting in the emergence of the English Divide, which encompasses the disparities experienced by individuals who are proficient in English. He assumed that the dominance of English poses a potential threat to other linguistic systems, leading to discrimination against those with less command of English well. This phenomenon gives rise to a division known as the English divide, wherein English speakers wield greater influence and have access to more resources than non-English speakers. Tsuda identified three strategies for addressing issues related to the dominance of English with the aim of fostering more equitable communities. These strategies include: 1) The monolingual approach, 2) The multilingual approach, and 3) The global scheme approach. The researcher's focus in this study is on the utilization of a multilingual approach. This approach places significant emphasis on the construction of equitable dynamics among various languages (Tsuda, 2008). The rationale for this perspective is the belief that achieving equal status among different languages will foster equality in communication and promote egalitarianism.

4. From bilingualism to multilingualism to plurilingualism

There is a fear of integration and communication at both the macro (societal) and micro (personal) levels. Several reviews (Darcy, 1963; Peal & Lambert, 1962) reveal that for at least 150 years, the idea that monolinguals are superior to bilinguals was accepted without question. According to studies conducted in the nineteenth century, “a bilingual child's intellectual and spiritual growth would be halved, certainly not doubled” (Baker, 1988, p. 9). Studies conducted after the turn of the century suggested “a facility in two languages reduces the amount of room or power available for other intellectual pursuits” (Baker, 1988, p. 10).

This idea persisted until the very end of the 20th century, way after the groundbreaking research on bilingual children by Peal and Lambert in 1962. The work of Peal and Lambert validated the advantages of bilingualism and paved the way for the idea of a person possessing more than one type of intelligence. According to their findings, being bilingual boosted one's (1) ability to switch gears quickly, (2) ability to think abstractly, (3) ability to generate superior concepts, (4) exposure to a richer, more diverse bicultural milieu, and (5) verbal IQ (Baker, 1988, p. 17). Peal and Lambert were not alone in advocating for a fresh approach to language study. Wandruska's (1979) visionary work revealed that native German speakers often use multiple dialects in everyday life, highlighting the fact that each language is a constantly evolving entity.

Such an innovative study would prove fruitful in the long run, particularly if more than two languages were taken into account, broadening the focus from bilingualism to multilingualism. Several novel ideas have been offered since the 1990s. The concept of multi-competence, first introduced by Cook (1992) in English-language literature, marked a watershed moment. Later, in reference to a particular setting (Wales) and practice, the term translanguageing was coined (Williams, 2002). From the more radical position of Makoni and Pennycook (2007), who view languages as developed phenomena that have to be “disinvented,” we have seen terms like code-meshing (Canagarajah, 2006), transidiomatic practices (Jaquemet, 2005), polylingualism (Jrgensen, 2008), and a broader vision of translanguageing

(García, 2009; Creese & Blackledge, 2010). All these ideas have helped understand linguistic diversity and bring attention to problems associated with multilingualism. In particular, they have argued against the generally held belief of languages as distinct entities that could not coexist. The term "multilingualism" has been shown to be inadequate for conveying the comprehensive and mixed nature of linguistic events and practices, as well as the dynamic nature of language use. Due to this, some researchers have offered two distinct perspectives on multilingualism: atomistic and integrative (Cenoz, 2013, p. 10), with the latter going beyond the traditional approach of treating languages independently. Some go even further, questioning the conceptual premises of prefixes like multi-, pluri-, inter-, or cross- (Blommaert, 2012).

Plurilingualism also emerged amid all this, founded in the research that led to The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages, or CEFR (Council of Europe, 2001). As Gogolin (1994) puts it, "the monolingual disposition" is when languages are studied independently, with researchers focusing "on the minority of the world's population —monolingual or mainly monolingual speakers— [driven by the idea that] only when we find how 'things work' in monolingual speakers-listeners will we be able to generalize the results to speakers of more than one language" (Pavlenko, 2005, p. 6). Because of this, "plurilingual practices and knowledge have not been able to flourish". According to Canagarajah and Liynage (2012), the prevalence of monolingual notions has hindered a full understanding and recognition of the significance of plurilingualism.

Upon presenting an overview of the theoretical foundations of multilingualism and plurilingualism, the researcher will now proceed to examine these two concepts.

Before this, it is important to define monolingualism as the opposite of multilingualism and plurilingualism. Cook (2001) defines monolingualism as a prominent style of language teaching in which the first language (L1) is treated as playing a negative role in the EFL classroom, because maximum exposure to the target language is the ultimate goal in this approach. In its extreme form, monolingualism bans all usage of the L1. Cook argues that this approach is only practical only in cases where the mother tongues of learners are different and/or the teacher's L1 is different from that of students.

However, recently, the acquisition of a third language and trilingual educational contexts have become the norm in different societies. For instance, France has expressed its intention to encourage plurilingualism as a means to meet the challenges posed by globalization (Piquemal & Renaud, 2006). Another example could be China (Li, 2013), as the postcolonial language policy of Hong Kong, commonly referred to as 'biliteracy and trilingualism', recognizes the equal importance of both Chinese varieties plus English in the region. Due to growing international mobility, an EFL classroom wherein students have the same mother tongue and cultural background is far from reality (Abney & Krulatz, 2015). But, with the presence of migrants in different societies, authorities have resorted to different language support systems to develop the target language of students and simultaneously encourage home language maintenance (Abney & Krulatz, 2015).

According to Marshall and Moore (2016), plurilingualism is concerned with the study of the repertoire and agency of individuals in several languages in different situations where the individual is a contact center and actor. Consequently, an individual's cultures and languages interconnect over time and

change under the impact of their origin, social history, and life paths. Therefore, it is imperative to reevaluate multilingual identities, as they can greatly contribute to fostering substantial intercultural comprehension while alleviating miscommunication (Cai et al., 2023).

Plurilingualism and multilingualism are similar in some respects. Both are sociolinguistic phenomena in contact conditions, where individuals use two or more languages in their interactions (Chabert, 2018). Plurilingualism goes beyond multilingualism because it covers issues related to social action, personal agency, identity, and performativity beside language plurality (Chabert, 2018). Social and individual notions are the main point of difference between the pluri and the multi; While multilingualism involves the study of societal contact, plurilingualism refers to the study of individuals' repertoires and agency in several languages (Chabert, 2018). As distinguished by the Council of Europe, multilingualism involves the presence of different languages in a geographical area; but plurilingualism is an individual's command of various languages. The two terms are commonly used interchangeably, as is the case in the present paper.

In a similar line of argument, the influence of multilingualism and multiculturalism on individuals' lives in both educational and general aspects has been stated as an important outcome of globalization. Contemporary societies are seldom homogenous. Diversity is there in the languages used, cultures, or ways of living and expressing oneself (King, 2017).

5. Critique

Rooted in Marxist and neo-Marxist theory and as the manifestation of the critical theory of the Frankfurt School, critical pedagogy means being critically aware of the constructed nature of human institutions, relationships, knowledge, and education, and helping learners to become aware of them. It is a transformational response to institutional and ideological domination (Gruenewald, 2003). However, as stated by Breuing (2009), there are multiple and varied definitions of critical pedagogy in the literature. As stated earlier, critical pedagogy is the opposite of English hegemony, and this is where multilingualism and plurilingualism come into play. This section of the study entails a more thorough examination of the consequences and constraints associated with the implementation of multilingualism and plurilingualism in the EFL classroom. While multilingualism and plurilingualism approaches present various benefits, they also present obstacles that require careful examination.

The sociopolitical backdrop of the educational system is a significant obstacle to the successful implementation of plurilingualism and multilingualism in the EFL classroom. In numerous geographical areas, there is a significant impetus to prioritize English language competency as a mechanism for societal and economic progress. The observation provided by the English Cambridge Assessment (2018) report highlights the evident manifestation of this phenomenon through the global language preferences. In a study conducted by King et al. (2010), a sample of non-linguistic-background students from mainland Europe were interviewed. The findings of the study unequivocally demonstrated the prominent influence of the English language on these students. Based on Eurostat data, English emerged as the predominant language that students were required to acquire throughout the majority of European Union member states in 2006/7 (Eurydice, 2008, p. 45). On a global scale, it has been estimated that two billion individuals, which accounts for one-third of the global population,

are engaged in the process of acquiring proficiency in the English language. China and India are often characterized as engaging in a competitive endeavor to invest in the promotion and acquisition of English language education (Graddol 2006, 2010; LoBianco et al., 2009). English is considered the primary foreign language in all secondary school curricula, even in nations that have been expressing opposition to the dominant influence of the United States, such as Iran. I believe that the prioritization of English hegemony may result in the disregard or depreciation of students' mother tongues or other languages within their linguistic repertoire. It is imperative for policymakers, educators, and stakeholders to gain an understanding of the inherent power dynamics involved and actively strive to foster linguistic diversity while also upholding the significance of English as a universally recognized lingua franca.

Critical pedagogy, multilingualism, and plurilingualism are all in support of developing criticality and critical thinking in EFL learners. For Freire (1970), critical pedagogy is concerned with the development of critical consciousness. He equates freedom with the recognition of a system of oppressive relations in the world and the identification of one's own place in this system. Making the members of the oppressed group critically conscious of their place is the starting point of liberty. Freire also deals with the notion of literacy by defining illiteracy as the absence of reading and writing skills and a feeling of powerlessness and dependency. He recommends an adult literacy campaign to address this issue, and his suggested method is dialogue. Literacy education is a primary form of cultural action and must link speaking to reality transformation. Besides reforming the mind, the habits, institutions, ideologies, and relations that create oppressed thinking must also be transformed. The transformation of inequitable, undemocratic, or oppressive institutions and social relations is the primary concern of critical pedagogy. Critical pedagogy should deal with the notion of cultural politics by both questioning and challenging cultural experiences that constitute the histories and social realities that in turn shape the forms that give meaning to the lives of learners (Freire, 1970).

In summary, Freire's viewpoint on critical pedagogy is in accordance with the analysis presented in this review, which explores the incorporation of plurilingualism and multilingualism within the EFL instructional setting. Educators that embrace a critical pedagogical framework have the capacity to actively participate in cultural politics, deconstruct linguistic power dynamics, and establish an inclusive educational setting that appreciates the many language backgrounds and cultural encounters of their students.

Furthermore, multilingualism and plurilingualism are pinned upon critical pedagogy since both are tied to post-modern thinking, which has its roots in the theories and ideas of French philosophers like Jean-François Lyotard, Jacques Derrida, Michel Foucault, Gilles Deleuze, and Julia Kristeva. According to post-modern theories, truth and knowledge are constructed entities, and there is no ultimate truth or objective knowledge (Webster, 2007). The post-modern view of knowledge rejects the idea of universal principles and values that all human beings all over the world should follow. In post-modernism, knowledge is personal, not impersonal; education and assessment systems must be fundamentally transformed; students' wants should be taken into account; and alternative forms of assessment such as dynamic assessment should be increasingly used (Webster, 2007). Parallel with these arguments, in multilingualism and plurilingualism, no single language and its associated knowledge, culture, and value system are superior to any other language, and all languages are equally

valid, valuable, and prestigious. I assume that the use of plurilingual and multilingual pedagogies in education empowers learners via acknowledging the inherent worth of their linguistic diversity and questioning the concept of an absolute truth or objective knowledge within the realm of language instruction.

The aforementioned rationales, along with additional considerations that may arise, provide compelling justification for the use of multilingualism and plurilingualism within the English as a Foreign Language (EFL) instructional setting. Today's generation of learners cannot be satisfied with limitations and constraints in different forms, including monolingualism. However, some arguments in support of monolingualism need to be further considered.

The presence of multilingualism and plurilingualism in the English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classroom, although well-intentioned, reveals significant discrepancies and conflicts that necessitate attention and resolution. The subsequent section delineates several crucial topics of concern.

The concept of theoretical ambiguity can be traced back to Marxist and neo-Marxist theories, where the endorsement of multilingualism and plurilingualism can be interpreted as a response to the dominant influence of the English language. However, this gives rise to a crucial inquiry: Does the incorporation of plurilingualism represent an authentic recognition of linguistic diversity, or is it merely a response to the current system? The theoretical foundation exhibits a complex nature and occasionally presents conflicting aspects, indicating a dearth of coherence in the fundamental philosophical framework.

In addition, the adoption of plurilingualism and multilingualism is hindered by significant sociopolitical obstacles. The emphasis placed on developing English language proficiency at a worldwide level is not only a matter of policy, but rather a manifestation of ingrained cultural beliefs and the interplay of global economic forces. The proposition to advocate for the elimination of English dominance in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) schools appears to disregard the complex interplay of historical, cultural, and political factors that have influenced the existing linguistic context.

Disregarding the Monolingual Perspective: The criticism of monolingualism, although justified in emphasizing the significance of varied linguistic repertoires, neglects certain pragmatic factors, such as the association between monolingualism and the acquisition of children's first language (Cook, 2001). The complete rejection of monolingual ways seems to be a reflexive response rather than a comprehensive comprehension of the pedagogical reasoning behind such methods.

The Complexity of Implementation: The inclination towards embracing multilingualism and plurilingualism seems excessively optimistic, disregarding the many intricacies and contextual interdependencies entailed in the execution of this strategy. Although the Greek and European education systems have achieved certain accomplishments, it would be very simplistic to assume that these approaches can be universally applied on a worldwide level. The presence of diverse socio-cultural backgrounds, governmental frameworks, and educational infrastructure across different locations can pose significant obstacles that are difficult to overcome.

There is a potential danger of oversimplifying the intricate nature of multilingualism and plurilingualism by exclusively associating them with post-modern thought. Languages encompass not only lexical elements, but also encompass comprehensive perspectives, historical narratives, and intricate power structures. The proposition that assigns equal validity, value, and prestige to all languages may fail to acknowledge the intricate dynamics of power, identity, and cultural hegemony that influence our understanding of languages.

The Limitations of Critical Pedagogy: Finally, it might be argued that the utilization of critical pedagogy as a theoretical framework for the integration of multilingualism and plurilingualism may possess certain constraints. Although the proposed approach presents a paradigm shift in addressing issues of power imbalance, it may lack sufficient pragmatic directives for effectively navigating the complexities inherent in real-life educational institutions.

6. Conclusion

Plurilingualism and multilingualism should be encouraged in the EFL classroom to enhance students' awareness of and interest in different languages. Frigolé and Tresserras (2023) argue that to promote a plurilingual and intercultural education, foreign language instructors should actively promote the utilization of students' native languages within the classroom setting. English hegemony blocks the path of multiculturalism; therefore, it should be removed from EFL classrooms as much as possible. This stance is intensified when different languages are considered helpful resources for learning the target language (Cook, 2001).

Research evidence has revealed pedagogical advantages to students' resorting to their linguistic repertoires in EFL learning (Moore, 2016). However, implementing this approach in EFL classes is not a straightforward task and is heavily context-dependent (Cook, 2001; Boeckmann, 2012).

Linguistic diversity has more benefits than linguistic uniformity, and that step should be taken to make it easier for a plurilingual or multilingual approach to be used in education, especially in places where the monolingual approach is still the norm. According to Llompart et al. (2023), aligned with the paradigm shift towards multilingualism and recognition of the pivotal role of teachers in fostering and implementing Language Supportive Teaching (LST), European initial teacher education (ITE) programs have incorporated linguistic and cultural diversity as an integral element within their curriculum. Also, in Greek education system, Gkaintartzi et al. (2023) devised a Greek language program that aimed to facilitate the implementation of pedagogical translanguaging. The objective of this program was to assist teachers in challenging dominant monolingual instructional practices and leveraging the diverse linguistic repertoires of children. Educators received training in the utilization of arts-based learning and the cultivation of creativity. The application of critical pedagogy to solve this dilemma necessitates a reframing of education through the prism of multiculturalism. However, this cannot be materialized overnight globally, and needs a paradigm shift in different systems of education, at least in those settings where monolingualism is present. This is a field which needs further exploration by future researchers.

In conclusion, it can be inferred that the information presented supports the notion that the topic at the incorporation of plurilingualism and multilingualism into the English as a Foreign Language (EFL)

classroom is unquestionably a captivating and groundbreaking concept. This offers a chance to question the prevailing paradigms and cultivate an educational setting that is more inclusive and equal. Nevertheless, the aforementioned comment highlights the complexity associated with this particular undertaking. The presence of theoretical uncertainty, practical obstacles, oversimplification, and the limitations of critical pedagogy necessitate thorough and meticulous consideration.

This discussion transcends the realm of academia and has a paramount significance as it directly impacts the educational experiences of a vast population of individuals worldwide. The task necessitates not only engaging in theoretical discourse, but also employing meticulous, nuanced, and contextually sensitive reasoning. In order to move forward, it is imperative to acknowledge the inherent intricacy of languages and actively interact with them, viewing them not merely as instruments of communication, but as dynamic manifestations of culture, authority, and individuality. The challenge at hand is powerful, yet the potential consequences are of such significance that it is imperative to refrain from accepting overly simplistic resolutions. In order to tackle this problem, future academics should adopt a dual approach characterized by boldness and humility, acknowledging the intricate nature of the task at hand and the far-reaching implications that triumph could yield in the realm of global education.

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